

The CLERGY REVIEW

NEW SERIES.

VOL. XXI, No. 5. NOVEMBER 1941

THE LITURGICAL CULT OF THE DEAD

THE liturgical rites accompanying the burial of the dead and the various commemorations—daily, monthly and annual, personal and general—of deceased Christians, may be likened to a monument raised by the exquisite tenderness of the Catholic Church to her departed children. As we have them at the present day in our Latin Missals and Rituals, these funeral formulæ are plainly seen to have been inspired by four distinct lines of thought which the liturgy has long since blended together into one harmonious whole. (i) The natural sorrow of the relatives and friends of the departed Christian. In their bereavement they seek consolation where alone true consolation is to be found: in the dogmas of the Communion of Saints and of the future Resurrection. One word sums up this feeling: *Resurgemus*—we shall meet again! (ii) Next, there is the sad necessity of committing the body to the earth. With motherly care the liturgy fondles, as it were, the poor human remains, surrounds them with marks of honour and reverence, is loth to part with them and when at last she closes the tomb, she does so with the certainty that at the end of time she shall behold the mortal part of man immortalized. That certainty is expressed in a thousand ways: for example in that matchless verse:

*Dormiunt in terrae pulvere;
Evigilabunt in vitam aeternam.*

(iii) Most important of all, there is the remembrance of the soul, which the liturgy contemplates as yet in its flight to God and dreading the judgement to come. This explains the deprecatory and expostulatory formulæ employed throughout the obsequies for the dead. They are now triumphant, now suppliant—but for the most part saddened by the thought of the shortcomings of the departed Christian, too well-known to the mourners to be easily forgotten even in this hour of overwhelming grief and of ample forgiveness. Counteracting these gloomy memories there is that of the merits of Christ, which even now, faith vouches for it, can be applied to the soul through the intercommunion of the prayers and suffrages of those already in heaven and of those left on earth. In Spanish Navarre etiquette demands that, after the mourners have returned in procession from the cemetery, they pass one by one before the relatives of the deceased and say: God grant you many years of life to pray for him. Lastly (iv), there is the remembrance of the dread judgement itself—both of the particular judgement of each individual after his demise and of the general judgement which shall close the history of mankind. That thought has inspired the terrifying scenes painted for us in the *Dies irae* and in the *Libera me, Domine*.

These four elements, we repeat, have combined to form the character of our liturgy for the dead. Chronologically that liturgy derived its earliest

inspiration from the first two of these elements and not until a later period from the third and fourth.

The dogma of the Resurrection is ultimately, as St. Paul shows, the root-cause of the difference between the pagan and the Christian outlook on life and death. Christians are not, and cannot be, *sicut et caeteri qui spem non habent*.¹ The *beata spes resurrectionis* colours all the beautiful anthems, verses and responses which we employ in the prayers for the dead; the more ancient they are the more they breathe forth that fragrant atmosphere of "blessed hope". The very terminology left to us by Christian antiquity is full of it: the deceased person is a *de-functus*, one who has been despatched to another place after having faithfully discharged his office. In the Mozarabic Ordinal the office for the dead is styled *Officium in finem diei hominis*²—the Office at the end of man's day, reminiscent of the parable of the labourers in the vineyard. In sundry Roman Sacramentaries it is called the *Sacrificium pro dormitione*³—the Mass for retiring to sleep. The place where the bodies of the departed are committed to the earth is a *Coemeterium*—a resting place. Old inscriptions in the Catacombs and elsewhere repeat that simile in a thousand ways:

DORMITORIUM USQUE AD RESURRECTIONEM.

HIC DORMIT IN REFRIGERIO.

HIC REQUIESCUNT IN SPE RESURRECTIONIS.

TE CHRISTUS IN PACE.

IN PACE IN IDIPSUM DORMIAM ET REQUIESCAM.

Our mediaeval forefathers put the same idea in a slightly different way: they called the cemetery God's acre, *Camposanto*, *Campo de Diós*; and instead of the despairing pagan *Aeternum Vale*, they made use, first in connection with the departed and then as a general expression of goodwill, of the Christian *Ad Deum*—*Ad-Dio*, *A-Diós*, *A-Dieu*.

The earliest liturgical formulae recited at the burial of a deceased Christian seem to have been only a variant of the liturgical office of the Martyrs. The Alleluja, with its joyous associations, was repeated throughout the office in anthems, verses, psalms and responses, as it is still at present in the Eastern Church. St. Jerome's description of Fabiola's funeral has been often quoted:⁴ "No sooner had she breathed her last and given back her soul to Christ, than the news spread of that great loss and gathered the whole city in the church for the obsequies. Psalms were sung and the mighty strains of the Alleluja resounded from the golden roofs of the temples." Examples of responses intermingled with the Alleluja, in use in the obsequies for the dead, abound in the ancient Sacramentaries, chiefly in the Mozarabic; here is one:⁵

¹ 1 Thess. iv, 13.

² Cf. Dom Férotin, *Le Liber Ordinum*, col. 107 seq. Paris, 1904.

³ Dom I. Schuster, *The Sacramentary*. Vol. V, p. 214. London, 1930.

⁴ Ep. 77, *ad Oceanum*, P.L., T.22, col. 697.

⁵ Dom Férotin, *op. cit.*, p. 713. See P.L., T.86, col. 328.

Alleluja. Tu es portio mea, Domine. Alleluja.
In terra viventium. Alleluja, alleluja,
Egredere de carcere, anima mea,
ad confitendum nomini Tuo.
In terra viventium. Alleluja, alleluja.

In our Roman Liturgy we have still, besides the pathetic *Subvenite*, the triumphant *In paradisum* and the confident

Requiem aeternam dona eis, Domine,
et lux perpetua luceat eis,—

which now gives the keynote to the whole liturgical composition. This verse shows the antiquity of the first draft of the Mass for the dead; since it is derived from the apocryphal Fourth Book of Esdras :¹

Requiem aeternitatis dabit vobis . . .
quia lux perpetua lucebit vobis . . .

The use, very rare, of apocryphal books in the liturgy cannot be later than the sixth century.²

It is interesting to note the variants of the *Requiem aeternam* in other Latin Uses; thus in the Ambrosian Missal we find :³

Requiem sanctam dona eis, Domine,
et lux misericordiae luceat eis,

and in the Mozarabic Ordinal :⁴

Requiem aeternam det tibi Dominus ;
lux perpetua luceat tibi,

followed by the response,

et repleat splendoribus animam tuam
et ossa tua revirescant de loco suo.
Aperiat tibi Dominus paradisi januam
ut ad illam patriam revertaris
ubi mors non est,
ubi dulce gaudium perseverat.

The writings of the Fathers are full of these sentiments. Indeed the Resurrection and the Commemoration of the dead is to them an inexhaustible source of inspiration⁵. To them all death is a joyous event, a

¹ ii, 34-5.

² Dom Schuster, op. cit., p. 221.

³ *Missale Ambrosianum pro Defunctis*, p. 132. Milan, 1794.

⁴ Dom Férotin, op. et i cit., p. 147.

⁵ The most important are: St. Justin, *De Resurrectione*, written c. 150; Athenagoras, *De Resurrectione mortuorum*, written c. 177; Minutius Felix in *Octavius*, *passim*; Tertullian, *De anima*, written c. 210, *De Carnis Resurrectione*, written c. 210; *De corona*, written c. 211; St. Cyprian, *De Mortalitate*, written c. 252; St. Methodius, *De Resurrectione*, written c. 300; St. Gregory of Nyssa, *De anima et resurrectione*, *Orationes de mortuis*; St. Ambrose, *De excessu Fratris sui De Bono Mortis*, etc.

veritable *dies natalis*—birthday. Thus St. Cyprian writes:¹ "We must not lament our brethren whom the Lord's summons has freed from the world, for we know that they are not lost, but gone before. We may not wear the black robes of mourning while they have put on the white raiment of joy. Nor may we grieve for those as lost whom we know to be living with God." And St. Ambrose:² "We quite forget the birthdays of our deceased brethren, for it is the day on which they die that we keep with greatest solemnity." The patristic treatises on the Christian cult of the dead culminate in the celebrated hymns of Prudentius, which we give below, and in the small classic, a gem of Christian literature, *De cura pro mortuis gerenda*,³ written by St. Augustine in answer to certain questions proposed to him by his friend St. Paulinus of Nola. It is now familiar, at any rate some of it, to those acquainted with the Roman breviary since, from Pius X's time, it fittingly supplies the lessons of the second Nocturn of the Office for the Dead on 2 November.

Those lessons should be compared with Prudentius's hymns, appointed to be recited *Circa exsequias defuncti* in the Mozarabic Rite. The two hymns of the great Spanish poet are indeed the best expression of the mind of the Church in the fourth century regarding the dead. Those "grand verses" are excerpts from the tenth hymn of the *Cathemerinon*, and have been described⁴ as "the crowning glory of the poetry of Prudentius", since "the deep Christian feeling and thought, the exquisite expression thereof and the admirable choice of metre . . . combine to make this poem the masterpiece of its kind in literature". Both hymns are equally inspired, but one will suffice here as an example:

Circa exsequias Defuncti Hymnus

*Jam moesta quiesce querella,
lacrymas suspendite, matres :
nullus sua pignora plangat,
mors haec reparatio vitae est.*

*Quidnam sibi saxa cavata,
quid pulchra volunt monumenta ?
nisi quod res creditur illis
non mortua sed data somno ?*

*Nam quod requiescere corpus
vacuum sine mente videmus
spatium breve restat ut alti
repetat conlegia sensus.*

*Venient cito saecula, cum jam
socius calor ossa revisat,
animataque sanguine viro
habitacula pristina gestet.*

Cease now from your sad dirge,
dry, ye mothers, your tears :
let no one mourn his dear ones,
this death means renewed life.

What else do these hewn stones,
what these fair monuments mean
save that the form which is entrusted to them
is not dead, but only sleeps ?

For though we see this body
resting now soulless and empty
we know that in but a little while
it shall seek the spirit's partnership.

The years will soon pass and once more
the warmth of life shall flow thro' these bones
and the spirit shall reoccupy
its former dwelling, alive once more.

¹ *De mortal*, 20.

² P.L., T.40, col. 591-610.

³ A. S. Walpole, *Early Latin Hymns*, pp. 139 seq. Cambridge, 1922.

⁴ *De Fide Resurrect.*, V, P.L., T.16, col. 1516.

*Quae pigra cadavera pridem
humilis putrefacta jacebant
volucres rapiuntur in auras
animas comitata priores.*

*Sic semina sicca virescunt
tam mortua jamque sepulta
quae reddita cespite ab imo
reteres meditantur aristas.*

*Nunc suscipe terra forendum,
gremioque hunc concipe molli :
hominis tibi membra sequestro
generosa et fragmina credo.*

*Animae fuit haec domus olim
Factoris ab ore creatae ;
serpens habitavit in istis
sapientia principe Christo.*

*Tu depositum tege corpus :
non inmemor ille requirit
sua munera fictor et auctor
proprieque aenigmata vultus.*

*Veniant modo tempora justa
cum spem Deus impleat omnem :
reddas patefacta necesse est
qualem tibi trado figuram.*

Elsewhere, in the *Apotheosis*, Prudentius wrote these superb lines¹ :

*Nosco meum in Christo corpus
resurgere ; quid me
desperare jubet ? Veniam
quibus Ille revenit
calcata de morte viis :
quod credimus hoc est !*

And the lifeless corpse which till now
has lain decaying within the tomb
welcomed afresh by their own souls
shall take their flight on airy wings.

Thus the dry seeds grow green again
which long have been dead and buried
sent forth once more from beneath the sod
they re clothe as of old the ears of corn.

Welcome him now, earth, and cherish him,
enwrap him in thy tender womb :
to thee I entrust this mortal frame,
poor remnant of a form once fair.

For once it was the soul's abode
created by God's own breath
here it dwelled aglow with life—
guided by the Eternal Wisdom.

Guard thou now the body we commit to thee :
He who forgets not shall require again
this gift, He who is its creator and fashioner
who gave it his own likeness.

May the time of fulfilment soon come
when God shall give us all we hope for :
then must thou render unto Him
unchanged the charge I give to thee.

I know my body shall rise in Christ,
why bid me, then despair ?
By that same path He once retraced,
death trodden 'neath His feet,
I too shall come.
This is my firm belief.

The liturgy, as we have just seen, seemed loth in those early centuries to stress unduly the note of sadness in the suffrages it offered for the Christian soul ; it loved rather to dwell on the certainty of a glorious resurrection. The most ancient Sacramentaries show that the rites used in the celebration of the *Sacrificium pro dormitione* took place amid the festal peal of bells, the burning of incense, the singing of psalms and hymns with the ever recurring refrain of the Alleluja. All this was followed in many places by the "banquet of charity", given to all who had come to assist at the funeral, curious relics of which are still to be found in several Catholic countries. Never a word of sorrow. It is also significant that the oldest monastic rules, including that of St. Benedict, contain no special legislation for the last rites to be performed for deceased monks. Indeed, later mediaeval customaries had to supplement the Holy Rule on this point.

Gradually, however, and chiefly owing to the influence of St. Gregory

¹ Lib. 2. 1063 seq.

the Great's writings, the obsequies for the dead began to lose their jubilant note of triumph and to assume darker and sadder tones. We may regret it, but in practice it was a timely change. It was now that the doctrine of purgatory and its logical implications regarding suffrages for the dead, began to assert itself in ever-growing measure in the Christian's daily life. That doctrine, of course, was by no means new: witness the Shepherd of Hermas (3rd vision), Clement of Alexandria,¹ the Epitaph of Abercius, the Acts of SS. Perpetua and Felicitas, etc. There are telling inscriptions like the following of the third century in the Roman Catacombs of Priscilla:

*Vos, precor, o fratres, orare huc quando venitis
Et precibus totis Patrem Natunque rogatis,
Sit vestrae mentis Agapes sacrae meminisse
Ut Deus omnipotens Agapen in saecula servet. Amen.*

There are also to be found representations of the Christian soul brought before the tribunal of Christ for particular judgement. One such, dating from the fourth century, can be seen in the Christian necropolis of Syracuse.² In course of time the fact of the impending judgement after death is more and more emphasized. Take for example the following French inscription of the fourth century³:

*Hic Dalmata, Christi morte redemptus,
quiescit in pace et diem futuri iudicii
intercedentibus Sanctis laetus specti (expectat).*

This development does not mean that the doctrine of the Resurrection was in any way lost sight of. We merely have to recognize that the complementary doctrine of the Communion of Saints was increasingly influencing the Christian mind and leading logically to such Christian practices as daily Masses for the dead, Gregorian Masses, rolls of charity, almsdeeds, anniversaries, Mass-foundations and bequests, etc. The early Middle Ages witnessed a marvellous growth of Christian devotion to the souls detained in purgatory. This culminated in the Cluniac Customary and became crystallized in the Solemn Commemoration of all the Faithful Departed on 2 November, ordered by St. Odilo in 998 for all the houses of the Cluniac Union and extended shortly after by the Holy See to the universal church. But even then in most places the Mass for the dead retained its beautiful consolatory preface, of early Christian inspiration, and did not yet include the terror-striking accents of the *Dies irae*, composed probably by the Friar Minor, Thomas of Celano, the biographer and companion of St. Francis.

For it was now the turn of the Friars to lead and canalize popular devo-

¹ *Strom.*, VI, 14 VII, 12.

² G. Wilpert, *La Fede della Chiesa nascente secondo i monumenti dell'arte funeraria*, pp. 266 seq. Citta del Vaticano, 1938.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 261.

tion. In most cases that devotion was considered semi-liturgical, or even extra-liturgical. Nevertheless, the literary output of those centuries—thirteenth to fifteenth—dealing with devotion to the dead was extraordinarily large, although only a few pieces have really lasting value. One such, still sung in several Catholic countries, is the following :

*O salutaris Hostia sacra,
integer Homo, Deitas vera :
fons et origo prima salutis,
parce defunctis !*

*Requiem cunctis, quaesumus, dona
in Te defunctis, et lux aeterna
meritis clemens et pietate,
luceat eis.*

The Carmelites especially, with their Brown Scapular and the Sabbatine Privilege, became the untiring fosterers of the cult of the dead, happily uniting two forms of Catholic piety dear to the heart of every true child of the Church : devotion to Mary and to the Holy Souls. There is a well-known Sequence still in use in many places, running as follows :

*Languentibus in purgatorio
qui purgantur ardore nimio
et torquentur gravi supplicio
subveniat tua compassio :
O Maria !*

How deeply the Catholic doctrine on purgatory laid hold of the minds of the faithful is shown in the lives and writings of the two Saints Catherine—of Bologna and of Genoa.

When the blight of Protestantism descended upon Christendom most of the old Catholic practices—such as the devotion to the Eucharist, to the Sacrifice of the Mass, to Our Lady, to the Saints, suffrages for the dead—disappeared from the areas in which heresy gained a footing. A natural reaction to this was an intensification of these devotions in all Catholic countries. Not all of them were perhaps directed *secundum scientiam* ; but the fact remains that as a whole they have enriched modern Catholic piety beyond all reckoning.

We have mentioned the proper preface of the Mass of the Dead. We refer, of course, to that which is now familiar to all the priests of the Roman Rite and which was restored to it by Benedict XV. The word “restored” is not quite exact. The preface, as we recite it now, is the final, and very happy, redaction of a liturgical piece used intermittently, at least since the sixth century, in a number of Western Churches. This preface is in itself a most felicitous epitome of the Christian view of life after death. It is remarkable as much for its theological accuracy as for the incomparable charm of its rhythmical phrases :

*In quo (Xto) nobis
spes beatae resurrectionis effulsit :
ut quos contristat certa moriendi conditio
eosdem consoletur
futuræ immortalitatis promissio.
Tuis enim fidelibus, Domine,
vita mutatur, non tollitur
et dissoluta terrestris hujus incolatus domo
aeterna in coelis habitatio comparatur.*

We may be allowed to append here, as a historical commentary, four of the earlier sources of this preface :

IN THE MOZARABIC ORDINAL. V-IX CENTURY.¹

Vere sanctus, vere benedictus es Domine Deus noster, auctor vitæ et conditor : qui futuræ resurrectionis es redditor et indulitor : qui promissæ immortalitatis dispensator es atque largitor : qui posuisti præsentis vitæ terminum ut æternitatis resereret introitum, et per finem præsentium principia panderes futurorum : qui necessitatem animarum recedentium a corporibus non interitum voluisti esse sed somnium, et dissolutio dormiendi roboraret fiduciam resurgendi : dum in Te credentium vivendi usus non amittitur sed transfertur, et fidelium tuorum mutatur vita, non tollitur. Etc.

IN THE GREGORIAN SACRAMENTARY. BEFORE A.D. 850.²

Vere dignum . . . Quoniam quamvis humano generi mortis inlata conditio pectora nostra contristet : tamen clementiæ tuæ dono spe futuræ immortalitatis erigimur, ac memores salutis æternæ non timemus lucis hujus sustinere jacturam : quoniam beneficio gratiæ tuæ fidelibus vita non tollitur sed mutatur, atque animæ corporo ergastulo liberatæ horrent mortalia, dum immortalia consequantur. Unde quaesumus ut famulus tuus (ille) beatorum tabernaculis constitutus evasisse se carnales gloriæ angustias, diemque iudicii cum fiducia voto glorificationis expectet. Per Christum, etc.

FROM THE AMBROSIAN *Missa pro Defunctis*—AS USED IN THE XVII CENTURY.³

Qui es assumptor animarum sanctorum. Quamvis enim mortis humano generi illata conditio pectora nostra mentesque nostras contristet, attamen per clementiam tuam spe futuræ immortalitatis erigitur : et memores salutis æternæ non timemus lucis hujus subire dispendium, quia misericordiæ tuæ munere fidelibus vita mutatur non tollitur : et in timoris tui observatione defunctis domicilium perpetuæ felicitatis acquiritur.

AS USED IN SEVERAL CHURCHES OF FRANCE AS LATE AS 1910.⁴

. . . In quo nobis spem beatae resurrectionis concessisti, ut dum naturam contristat certa moriendi conditio, fidem consoletur futuræ immortalitatis promissio. Tuis enim fidelibus, Domine, vita mutatur non tollitur, et dissoluta terrestris hujus habitationis domo, aeterna in coelis habitatio comparatur.

It is to be hoped that this preface, as we now recite it in the Mass for the dead, will help us to re-capture somewhat of the feelings of hopeful expectation and ardent longing which evidently inspired those who conceived it first in the ages of faith : to think less of the horrors of the tomb and more of the future resurrection.

Besides the restoration of this preface, the two most important liturgical developments in recent times in the cult of the dead were made under

¹ Dom Férotin, op. cit., col. 421 seq.

² H. A. Wilson, *The Gregorian Sacramentary*, p. 301. London, 1915.

³ *Missale Ambrosianum pro Defunctis*, pp. 94-5. Milan, 1794.

⁴ *Petite Année Liturgique*, p. 1530. Paris, 1910.

Popes Pius X and Benedict XV. In the reform of the Roman breviary carried out under the former, 2 November was assigned exclusively to the Solemn Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed, the office of the *infra Octavam* of All Saints, which up to that time had continued to be celebrated simultaneously with the office of the dead, being suppressed for that day. Benedict XV extended to the universal Church the privilege granted since the seventeenth century to all the clergy under the Spanish Crown of celebrating, also on 2 November, three Masses for the faithful departed. Another interesting development was the insertion by Pius X in the Martyrology for 2 November, of an unusual *memoria*. It expresses with great accuracy the mind of the Church in her cult of the dead: "On this day the commemoration of all the faithful departed: when Holy Church, their common Mother, having taken care to celebrate with fitting praise all those of her children who now rejoice in heaven, endeavours also to help by her suffrages, which are of avail before Christ her Lord and Spouse, all those who still groan in purgatory, that as speedily as may be they may attain the companionship of the citizens of heaven."

ROMANUS RIOS, O.S.B.

OLD ENGLAND AND HER DEAD

WHEN Tudor England parted with the Old Religion in exchange for a caricature clothed only in her shift no greater ravage upon her ceremonial was made than that upon her *Funeral Rites*. The result of this has been that each successive generation has striven to surpass its predecessor in an external display of mourning and respect for its dead. If mediaeval ceremonial in the height of its glory was a little overdone it is yet not to be compared with the extravagances, devoid of all meaning and significance, of which these later centuries have been guilty. So true is this that the expression "to lie like an epitaph" has become current in our language and our churches and graveyards have become the receptacles of monumental monstrosities that ridicule rather than reverence those whose memory they have been raised to immortalize.

Unfortunately the Catholic population of the land, in striving to hold their place in society while at the same time remaining true to the principles of their Religion, have in this as in many other things been influenced by fashion more than by Faith and shared the excesses of their spiritually less fortunate brethren. And today, when a reaction has set in and a simple and severe lavishness has supplanted much of the earlier trumpery, they still follow the fashion but without approaching any nearer to Catholic ideals and expressiveness.

Our Catholic forefathers on the contrary, while indulging in most elaborate ceremonial, clung jealously to it because they saw in it both a meaning and a value that could not be gainsaid. They lived in an age when education, though by no means altogether lacking, was scarce and very far from pretending that it could teach the masses of the people by other means than pictures depicted by the brush or the needle, the tongue or the pen, the living scene or the silent tableau. Everything was pressed into service to teach a lesson, to point a moral and to remind them of their duty to their God and their fellow man.

Hence we find in the funeral rites of those days the smallest details no less than the greatest given a meaning and significance that made them precious, if not almost sacred, to those whose duty it was to perform them or to witness them. Hardly had the Passing-Bell, or *Forthfare* as it was sometimes called, ceased to call all within earshot to pray for the soul that was about to enter upon its last journey and the priest, who had knelt beside the bed of ashes to assail him, closed his little *Liber Passionis*, than those relatives to whom it fell to wash the body commenced their task while the priest recited the appropriate prayers from the Ritual, reminding them that as Our Saviour's body was washed by the disciples and anointed with spices against the day of His Glorious Resurrection so should the bodies of the faithful be prepared for the day of Resurrection of all flesh. And by those who could afford it this anointing with spices was usually added to the ceremony.

This ceremony being concluded the body was shrouded or clothed ready for burial. And while a shroud was the usual covering for a corpse, a child who died within a month of its Baptism was buried in its *chrisom*, or the garment in which it had been christened and which was so made as to facilitate the two anointings included in that ceremony.¹ Probably here, in an age that knew no system of liturgical colour as we have it today, we see the first evidence of the use of white as the correct colour for the burial of infants.

The bodies of kings and nobles were arrayed in garments befitting their station and those of bishops in their episcopal vestments. It was the custom also in Anglo-Saxon times to bury with a bishop a particle of the Blessed Sacrament placed in a chalice or enfolded in a corporal. In the case of these great ones of the earth it was also customary to coffin or *chest* the body. But it was to be many years before the coffin became for ordinary folk anything but a luxury. Communal or parochial coffins were to come first, in which the dead were placed only until they reached the grave. A few of these are still extant and may still be seen stored in the niche prepared for them in the church wall, as at Youhal in Ireland. It is interesting to note too that these simple Irish folk, like their brothers across the water, were in those days so imbued with the spiritual significance of death that, when the private coffin did come into general use, they would insist that at the graveside the nails be removed lest they should impede the body on the Day of Resurrection.

It is this spirit that pervades all the rites and ceremonies with which we are here concerned. If those blessed with much of this world's substance and those of high degree sought at their death a more lavish and ostentatious performance of their obsequies, at the same time they made it quite clear that they did so that they might the better and the longer be remembered by those who witnessed the mournful pageantry and so derive benefit from their suffrages. On the other hand, there were those who took a different view of the matter and left behind them instructions that they should be buried with the least possible pomp and display that thereby they might the more closely resemble their Divine Saviour, who in His eternal decrees arranged that there should not be time immediately after his death to observe the customs laid down by the Jewish Law. But whichever choice was made, one fact stands out above all others: While men and women were as human in those days as they are today, yet they took a far more unselfish interest in one another's welfare; this latter fact caused them almost to forget their personal grief and mourning in their anxiety to do everything possible for the soul of the one who had gone from their midst. And so we find that among high and low alike funeral rites were carried out with the greatest exactitude and the most loving care even by those to whom the departed soul had meant but little in life.

¹ Puckle, *Funeral Customs*.

As the body was borne to the church all and sundry would accompany it, taking the most direct route through the property of lord or swain, chanting the *Miserere* and the *Kyrie*, until they had deposited their burden in the church. There it would rest, placed, whether it were the body of priest or of layman, with its feet to the East and so facing both the altar upon which the Divine Sacrifice would be offered for it on the morrow and that direction whence, it was always taught, the Sun of Justice would come on the Last Day and in which direction, therefore, the risen body would be in a position to hurry to meet Him.

Around the body would then be placed the *hearse*.¹ This lineal ancestor of our modern carriage known by that name was an arched framework of wood draped in black and fitted with metal sockets into which could be fitted wax lights that would be left to burn in sacrificial prayer for the release of the soul from the flames of Purgatory and in honour of the body which, it was hoped, would rise in glory on the day of General Resurrection. That this latter thought might not be overlooked the hearse was also fitted with a roof or ceiling which consisted of a picture, painted upon cloth or wood, of Christ coming in Glory, and was known as the *Majesty*.

In the humble country church there was little likelihood of the Office for the Dead—or *Placebo* and *Dirige* as the Vespers and Matins and Lauds were familiarly called—being chanted or said, even though the many chantry priests to be found up and down the land made that far more possible than it is today. But in the then growing towns and in the monastic and cathedral churches it was by no means an uncommon thing for the Liturgy thus to be carried out in its entirety.

But whether the Office for the Dead was recited or not, one thing is quite certain: no corpse was ever brought into the church for any other purpose than that Mass might be offered for the repose of its soul. The custom which has since crept in (and with which some of the clergy are still tempted to toy), by which a corpse is allowed to "call in" at a church on its way to the grave in order that the priest may say over it the *Libera*, or even some non-liturgical prayer, was not known and would never have been tolerated in those Catholic days. At a time when clergy were plentiful in the land it was seldom necessary for a priest to say two Masses on one day. But in order that no corpse entitled to Christian burial should be allowed to be buried without its Mass of *Requiem* a Council held at Oxford in the year 1222 expressly decreed that in addition to Easter Sunday and Christmas a priest might also binate when a corpse was to be interred.

Before, however, the actual Mass was commenced next morning a little service which has no place in the Roman Ritual and which was called the *Commendation of Souls* was either said or chanted. It consisted of several appropriate Psalms recited while the priest in alb and stole proceeded to

¹ Peacock, *Church Furniture*.

the graveyard; here he marked the spot where the grave was to be dug by digging out the form of a cross and sprinkling it with Holy Water, repeating at the same time the words of the 117th Psalm, "Open ye to me the gates of justice: I will go into them, and give praise to the Lord. This is the gate of the Lord; the just shall enter into it." And Dr. Rock holds the theory that it was in order that the priest might the more easily pass from the sanctuary for this purpose that many of our old churches have a small door on the south side of the chancel opening directly upon the graveyard.¹ However that may be, this ceremony was conscientiously observed whenever a burial took place outside the church itself.

Burial within the church was, as the many old tombs, stone and brasses amply testify, by no means an uncommon thing among our Catholic forefathers. But it was an honour reserved for those who by reason of their good works, their charity and their generosity had deserved well of Mother Church; and it was only in Reformation days that the temptation of *Piety Money* proved too much for the churchwardens and all were indiscriminately accorded this privilege provided only that they could pay the fee. That the church floor should thus become an ever-open charnel-house was never the mind of the Church; on the contrary such burial was always regarded in Catholic times as the privilege of the few. Again let us remind our reader that it was felt that such a privilege not only gained for the departed soul a constant reminder in the prayers of the faithful whenever they came to church and a special thought when, as was often the case, lights were burnt on the grave on the anniversary of the death of the entombed, but also that they would thereby profit from every Mass that was offered up in the church in which they rested. But, above all, they coveted the privilege of having raised over their tomb the Easter Sepulchre in which the Blessed Sacrament would repose from Maundy Thursday until the dawn of Easter Day.

But we run on a little. To return to our funeral. At the Offertory of the Mass what was known as *Soul-Shot* was offered. Under this heading came first of all whatever movables the deceased had willed to the Church, including those to which the Church laid claim, either by custom or by decree, as well as debts outstanding which usually concerned tithes. Often these overlapped; so for instance in the will of Elizabeth Lady Latimer in the year 1480 we read "in recompense of tithes and oblations forgotten and not paid". The Church claimed as a debt the best animal the deceased died possessed of. This usually in the case of a knight was his war-horse which was therefore at this point in the Mass either led or ridden into the church and solemnly presented to the priest, who generally disposed of it by selling it back afterwards to the family of the knight. A relic of this custom we see, of course, today in the charger of a king or other person of high degree that in the funeral procession follows immediately upon his coffin. Two other modern customs take their origin from a further

¹ *Church of Our Fathers*. Vol. II, Part I, c. 7.

mortuary-gift made at the funerals of the great at this time: The more important and wealthy among the friends and relatives of the deceased would come accompanied by their squire or their husband's squire armed with a rich piece of material, often a large piece of cloth of gold. This they would now receive from the squire and place over the corpse—and sometimes not one but several. These were known as *Palls* and those who presented them as *pall-bearers*. Hence we have our modern pall of black with a white or gilt cross, which quickly grew out of this custom in those distant days, and the pall-bearer whose name seems so anomalous in our modern funeral ceremonial. These palls were again always regarded as the property of the church, given in the spirit of sacrifice that thereby spiritual benefit might be derived by the soul of him upon whose bier they were cast. They were made up into the vestments for which the period was famous and of which some are still treasured in church and museum and private ownership.

Our Present *Libera* which follows upon the *Requiem* Mass and which, though known as the "Absolutions", leaves us wondering in what precisely the Absolution consists, was not known at this time. The priest would recite the *Kyrie* and then either he or a herald dressed in armour or tabard would call upon the faithful to pray: "Pro anima N. et pro animabus omnium fidelium defunctorum, Pater Noster." The priest would then incense the bier and bless it with Holy Water, and immediately the procession would be formed to go to the graveyard. There they would wait while the grave was dug, singing Psalms the while.

If the body was chested a parchment scroll had been placed within the coffin. Otherwise this was now placed by the priest upon the corpse just before it was lowered to the grave. And to our mediaeval forebear it was this scroll and the pardon it contained—now recited by the priest—that was known as the Absolution. It was in fact the parchment upon which had been written the authorization granting to whatsoever priest might have attended the man upon his death-bed the necessary faculties to absolve him from whatever sins or censures he may have incurred, and granting for the same a Plenary Indulgence. This done, the priest once again incensed the corpse and blessed it with Holy Water and then, when the body had been let down into the grave, cast a little earth upon it in the form of a cross, much as is still done by our Anglican brethren today.

This done, however, the mediaeval Catholic by no means felt that his duty to the dead was complete. We are all familiar with the many tombs, and brasses and gravestones that date back to pre-Reformation days, and with their touching plea for the prayers and suffrages of those who pass by or over them: "Orate pro anima," or as at Gillingham, Kent:

Es testis, Christe, quod non jacet hic lapis iste,
Corpus ut ornatur, sed spiritus ut memoretur;
Hinc tu qui transis medius, magnus puer an sis,
Pro me funde preces, quia sic michi venie spes.

or at Holm-next-the-Sea in Norfolk :

Henry Notyngnam and hys wyffe lync here
Yat maden this chirche stepull and quere
Two vestments and belles they made also
Christ hem save therefore ffro wo
And to bringe hem soules to Chris at heven
Sayth Pater and ave with Mylde Steven.¹

But before time would permit any permanent erection to be placed over the grave the care of those left behind sought other means of helping him they mourned. Upon a grave within the church wax tapers were kept burning for at least a month after the burial and sometimes for as much as a whole year. If the grave was in the churchyard flowers and evergreens, especially the willow and yew, as symbols of resurrection, were placed upon it; but always in this spirit of sacrifice according to which it was argued that in as much as these things cost them money the sacrifice they made would thereby benefit the soul of which they thought. There are instances on record of those of high degree leaving bequests for lights to be kept burning upon their tombs in perpetuity, hoping by this means to speed their journey into everlasting bliss not only by their own act but also by the prayers of those whose attention would be drawn by the sight of these lights as they entered the church. The same thought too inspired them, as we have seen, to leave money for the erection of an imposing tomb upon which would appear their effigy, their armorial bearings, and a delightful mass of Catholic symbolism, for example the lion beneath their feet, reminiscent of the lion from whose jaws we pray in the Offertory of the Mass for the Dead to be delivered, and the Archangel Michael² who first overcame him and cast him for ever from the face of the Lord. Similarly too their decorations, honours, or robes of state were not infrequently placed upon the tombs of the nobility, as in the case of the Black Prince whose centuries-old velvet surcoat and helm may to this day be seen hanging above his tomb in Canterbury Cathedral. Sometimes again may be found an aumbry or shelf set over a tomb in which was contained a *Portoos* or Breviary from which priests and others who knew how to read might go, out of devotion or duty as the case might be, to recite the Office for the repose of their souls.

And that the wealthy ones of this world should be able thus to enjoy advantages in death did not seem in any way strange to the folk of those times when such a thing as Socialism was happily not yet dreamed of. Had not Our Lord given us the parable of the talents? To whom much is given much shall be demanded; these souls perhaps had more to make good beyond the grave than their less exalted brethren. But whether they had or not did not really matter much, for they did not ask prayers merely for themselves, but in asking them for themselves included also

¹ Puckle, *Funeral Customs*.

² Thurston, *The Memory of Our Dead*.

in their request a thought for the souls of all the faithful departed. The phrase we so familiarly use, "For these and for the souls of all the faithful departed" (itself but an echo of the "Ipsis, Domine, et omnibus in Christo quiescentibus" of the canon), can be traced not merely to this period but to the very earliest Christian texts of which we have evidence. But there is no need here to deal with that very familiar custom of inscribing and week by week announcing the *Diptychs* or, as it was known in this land, *Bidding the Beads*. Suffice it to say that to have one's name inscribed in the *Liber Vitae* of church or monastery was so jealously sought after that many for that purpose alone were inspired to make gifts to the Church in one form or another in order to qualify as benefactors for this great spiritual advantage. And of the munificence of such folk we may find ample proof in the still extant bead-roll of the Church of Our Lady at Sandwich in Kent.¹ It is far too long to reproduce in the space of a short article; but here are a few extracts taken at random:

Also for the sawle of Harry Cambrig heremyte the whyche gaf a chalys of xxv ounces syluer.

Also for the sawlys of Stephyn Gerard and Margery hys wyff of whoos goodys was gevyn a good newe masse boke.

Item for the sawlys of John Colwyn and of hys wyff the whyche gaf be ther ly dais the best crosse of syluer and gylt with a staf of laton ther to, the whyche cost xxv li.

Another favourite gift to a gild or a Religious House was a *Mazer*, or *Poculum Caritatis* as it was more often called, and that because, according to the Bollandists, both Boniface VIII and Eugene IV granted indulgence to those who at the end of a meal should drink soberly and sparingly of this Loving-Cup.² So too we find that the many *Doles*,³ some of which are still either wholly or in part in existence today, had a similar origin. The sum of £40 and a thousand little cakes bearing the moulded impression of the Biddenden Maids of Kent should still, if they fulfilled their purpose, elicit a prayer for the repose of the souls of those twelfth-century Siamese twins. Of similar origin is the Tichborne Dole, now eight hundred years old, and founded by Lady Tichborne upon her death-bed. Tradition has it that when she asked her husband for a piece of land to provide a gift of food and money to all poor people on the feast of the Annunciation, he snatched a burning faggot from the fire and told her that she could have as much land as she could crawl round before the faggot burned itself out. She prayed to Our Lady and was enabled to encompass no less than twenty-three acres before the faggot quietly dissolved into ashes. And to this day the Dole is known as the *Crawl*.⁴

These *Doles* sprang from the custom of distributing alms at funerals. At the Anglo-Saxon Council of Calchuth (A.D. 816) it was enacted that at

¹ Boys, *History of Sandwich*.

² Rock, *Church of Our Fathers*. Vol. II, Part I, c. 7.

³ Tyack, *Lore and Legend of the English Church*.

⁴ Drake-Carnell, *Old English Customs and Ceremonies*.

the death of a bishop everyone in the diocese should give a tithe to the poor for the good of the dead prelate's soul.¹ The canon seems to have been forgotten but not its spirit. And in later centuries we find countless bequests such as that of Richard Towler, who in 1477 willed that £10 "be disposed of at my burying among the poor people", and that another ten "be given to the marriage of poor maidens not having father or mother". "Volo," says Alan, Master of Sherborne Hospital, in 1411, "ut die exequiarum mearum XX marcae pauperibus distribuantur".² Very often these Doles were either wholly or in part in the form of food, and then they would be blessed by the Church with the following prayer, "Precamur te, Domine, clementissime pater, ut eleemosyna ista fiat in misericordia tua, ut acceptus sit cibus iste pro anima famuli tui, ill. et sit benedictio tua super omnia dona ista."³ With the rise of the gilds such Doles became still more popular and among them and folk of high degree frequently assumed very large proportions. And so we find Alms-Houses appearing where the inmates had the obligation of assisting at Mass and saying so many belts of *Paters* and *Aves* and the *De profundis* for the repose of the souls of their benefactors. What a travesty this duty has become today when the present occupants discharge this duty by attending a service so alien to that provided for by the donor!

All that has so far been said regarding the various other means by which our Catholic forefathers sought to obtain prayers for their souls pales almost to a shadow before their love of the Mass and the provisions made for its celebration on their behalf. It was the ambition of everyone (and through monasteries and the gilds it came within the power of everyone) to enjoy the benefits of the Mass not only upon the day of their obsequies but also upon the third, seventh and thirtieth day after and often for many years, if not in perpetuity. And in the custom still surviving by which Anglicans who seldom enter a church will yet make a point of doing so on the Sunday following the funeral of a relative, we have the last relic of the old custom by which a *Requiem* was allowed in England for one whose funeral had taken place during the week. The thirty days' prayer for the dead was also popularized in the form of thirty Masses—known as St. Gregory's Trental—which many willed to be said for them within a year of their death. It is interesting too to note about these that they were not "Black" Masses. The Sarum Rite gives them as follows: "Tres missas de nativitate Domini: tres de Ephyphania Domini: tres de purificatione Beatae Mariæ: tres de annunciatione ejusdem: tres de resurrectione Domini: tres de ascen. Domini: tres de Pentec.: tres de Trinitate: tres de assumptione Beatae Mariæ Virginis: et tres de nativi. ejusdem; itaquod iste misse celebrentur infra oct. dictorum festorum sicut in prima die." Priests to say these Masses there were, of course, in plenty, and at any rate so far as offering the Holy Sacrifice was concerned they were fully

¹ Wilkins, *Concilia*.

² Rock. Op. cit. Vol. III, Part I, c. 8.

³ Rock, *Hierurgia*.

occupied. Ditchfield, in his book *The Old-Time Parson*, estimates that "There were in England about two thousand chantries founded chiefly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Each of these had its own Mass Priest and many of them had a number." But not every chantry demanded the daily Intention of its priest. And even if it did the fact that every little parish, or *Sbriftshire* as it was often called (because folk were then expected to go to their own priest to Confession), had its own priest and that there were numbers of big monastic houses in the land provided amply for the big demands made upon the offering of the Divine Sacrifice.

The Spirit of the age in this respect finds summary expression in the case of those who, either in their lifetime or after their deaths, caused bridges to be erected over rivers or swamps, at the same time arranging that a chapel be built either upon it or near by, and leaving land both for the upkeep of the bridge and for the provision of a priest and the offering of the Holy Sacrifice. In this way the donor strove to benefit others as well as himself both in this world and the next. It is given, however, to few to express their munificent charity upon such a scale as this. Nevertheless pious ingenuity is seldom at a loss, and in an old pre-Reformation house at Besthorpe in Norfolk over the parlour chimney is inscribed the couplet:

All you that sitt by thys fire warmyng
Pray for the sowle of Sir John Downyng.¹

OSWALD M. BUSSY.

¹ Blomefield, *Norfolk*.

FELLOW HELPERS OF THE TRUTH

I

AMONG the inevitable results of the present war will be a deep and, to a large extent, desirable reformation not only of political ideas but of the status of the individual in the community. We have to face the certainty of a social order vastly different from any we have experienced, the incalculable precipitate of all that is now in the melting pot. And there is no reason to believe that the religious movements which have accompanied wars in the past will not occur again. This means that a large number of people, to whom religious observance was merely a conventional duty, will "cease to practice". Others will recognize the necessity of a spiritual basis in life, and many of these will be led to enquire into the credentials of the Catholic Church and submit to her divine authority. Among Catholics themselves there will be the awakening of a large number who previously constituted part of the "Church Dormant", and a return to greater fervour both in personal life and corporate activity.

It is in these circumstances, of necessary adjustment and reorganization, that Catholics in this country will have to welcome and absorb those who become their new brethren in the Faith. It is not inopportune, therefore, to consider some of the problems the situation presents; that it is not only opportune but very necessary is demonstrated by past difficulties of the same kind.

One may, of course, deny the likelihood of "large-scale" conversions and of the increased activity of corporate Catholicism. To one who does, that which follows below can be accounted no more than barren speculation. But it may be suggested that such a denial is made in the face of every indication to the contrary. War does play havoc in religion and is the occasion of great loss, and the present war with its added problems of evacuated children, bombed churches, and dispersed parishes can be no exception. It is, however, for this very reason that we should be ready to make the most of whatever good may come to us, receiving those who are sent to us that with them we may be "fellow helpers of the truth" (III John, 8).

II

The problem of absorption and subsequent development presents more facets than can now be considered. Since it is necessary to be selective, let us regard a fundamental difficulty—that of the absorption of an individual into a family, a family with a very definite consciousness of its isolation, a tremendous pride in its traditions, an awareness of the essential antagonism between itself and the world around it; and yet a family which shares this world, which must penetrate it, and must transform it.

The difficulty is caused in part by the attitude of the new Catholic, in part by that of the old, and these are psychological difficulties almost as hard to state as they are to solve. However, the attempt should be made, so let us consider how individuals are affected by some fairly general influences. We have in mind not the many converts who join the majority of Catholics in leading their own lives and taking little active part in anything else, but those who as priests or layfolk join others already active in Catholic affairs.

III

Since the *Apologia* a constant stream of publications has widened and even deepened the channel cut by Newman's classic and it is unlikely that any particular aspect of conversion, or reconciliation, from the convert's point of view has been left untouched. While it is true that these accounts are mostly, and quite ostensibly, subjective, it is to this very subjectivity that their greatest value is to be ascribed, for, failing a wide and ever-increasing circle of convert friends, those of us who have enjoyed the Faith from childhood must go to these books to keep ourselves *au courant* with a vitally important development of religious consciousness.

These volumes usually describe an impact and a reaction—the impact on an already formed mind of the essence, rather than the existence, of the Catholic Church, and the resultant mental processes which shape a new attitude to a familiar institution now seen, under the light of Grace, in an entirely different aspect. There would seem to be a development so general as almost to be postulated as a law: first, a beautifully humble acceptance of everything Catholic with unquestioning gratitude—an attitude which often embarrasses those whose familiarity with the same things has led, not to contempt, but to benevolent criticism. This first reaction expands along one of two lines, either the wholehearted pursuit of all that is most venerable by reason of its age, or the no less zealous attempt to show the treasure of the Church in terms judged most acceptable to the “modern mind”. The former shows itself as a “return”—characterized by exemplary abandonment of personal opinion and taste to accepted (and, therefore, *safe*) authorities who have endured the test of centuries. On the other hand, the latter shows itself in terms of an “advance”—the expression of an apostolic awareness of the Church's mission to the world, and the desire to represent the Church to the world of today in such a way, without any sacrifice of teaching or principle, as will prove most acceptable and forestall antagonistic reactions.

Two quite typical attitudes of converts in Rome will illustrate the difference: for one Rome is the city of the catacombs, the martyrs' shrines, the pilgrim streets; for the other Rome is the centre of that universal organization, life, and activity which is the external Church.

There are, of course, hereditary Catholics who share these positions,

and who share, too, the often depressing experience of finding effort along one or other line not only less fruitful among non-Catholics than was hoped, but even provocative of opposition from brethren in the Faith. It is with this Catholic opposition that we are concerned. Common sense, general experience, and repeated pronouncements of pontiffs all indicate the vital part converts must play in the conversion of others, but we cannot burke the fact that the efforts of converts to further this work have frequently met with coldness and disapproval, even active antagonism from those who must not be judged to have less zeal for the cause of Christ and His Church. Why should this be? Possibly the reason is to be found in the existence of extremists along one or other line, provoking the sort of reaction caused by Father Faber's introduction of popular Roman devotions to London, or by the writings of still more modern converts. But there would seem to be reason to enquire if there be not some factor at work among the Catholic body itself, and some general attitude which contributes to the difficulties.

IV

One of the predominant characteristics of hereditary Catholics is trepidation. The motto *nihil innoventur* possesses a charm altogether apart from doctrine—it is taken as the passport to peaceful existence in a non-Catholic community. It might be expressed, less elegantly but more forcefully, as the policy of letting sleeping dogs lie. This "penal-days mentality", fairly common among active and inactive Catholics alike, may be expressed thus: we are a small minority, we often possess advantages and privileges out of all proportion to our numbers, we can best live, and work, and spread, by drawing as little attention to ourselves as possible; for if we draw a great deal of attention some of it will be hostile and we are in no position to give battle. To those who think like this anything in the way of noticeable expansion or alteration of methods of the apostolate, or of public agitation for the recognition of rights, is unwelcome.

This attitude does not rule out zealous work for the Church; on the contrary, it is found not infrequently among those who are tirelessly participating in Catholic affairs and bearing heavy burdens. But while they work they have always one eye cocked for the least sign of unfavourable reaction to their efforts. To them the greatest disaster is *indiscretion* in speech or print; their greatest dread is that some prominent Catholic, or the Catholic Press, will bring down the rebuke from non-Catholics that we are meddling, ungrateful, or arrogant. The complaint has been made more than once that Catholic public men are more public than Catholic—if this be true the blame may lie not so much with those who are prominent as with a large section of those they try to represent.

The convert does not share this mentality and its existence is usually unknown to him. He cannot understand why sound causes are often not

advanced, and promising movements given little and grudging support. His zeal awakens all the fearful anticipations of those to whom he turns for approval and help and he receives, instead of the encouragement he might rightly expect, a douche of cold water from an alarmed fire-fighter! Not a few hereditary Catholics have met the same fate in their struggles to overcome the "penal-days mentality".

Another of our not uncommon characteristics is the parochial mind. It is not unknown in the Church of England and other religious bodies, but the convert, knowing himself to have become possessed of all that is most truly described as *catholic*, cannot be expected to realize to what a great extent it exists among us. He feels himself released from bonds and narrow confines, made a freeman of the City in which all are free. It is natural for him, as it should be for us, to think on a Catholic scale, and he learns only by saddening experience that the necessary administrative divisions of parishes and dioceses have led all too often to that very parochialism of mind from which he thought he had escaped.

There is, however, another characteristic of the English Catholic body, deeper and much more far-reaching than these, something which clearly distinguishes the usual convert from the usual hereditary Catholic and comes from those most precious things, the Catholic home and school, and the customs we acquire in them. It is what we may, perhaps, call our Catholic instinct, implanted in the child and gradually developed by Catholic influences during the years of formation. As the child grows up he is brought to an awareness of the primacy of the needs of his soul, and to some degree of knowledge how these needs are to be served. This process is partially unconscious—a point of importance—but consciously or unconsciously there is being developed a Catholic instinct, or Catholic sense, which is a determinant in judgement. In later years, more or less vehemently according to the value of the influences at work in his infancy and youth, the man will act and react often with no more conscious reason than a *sense* of the rightness of that which he does. Without any deliberate process of judging he will determine this or that fitting or unfitting, right or wrong, not only in matters of faith and morals, but even in matters of less importance. At the same time one may, perhaps, assert that the extent, and depth, and delicacy of his perception will bear a relation to the conscious self-education of earlier years, as opposed to more or less passive submission to the forces of environment.

Now this Catholic instinct is, of its very nature, rarely to be found among those who have not enjoyed the circumstances in which it is developed. Instead, generally speaking, the convert will have a much more deliberative judgement, and his criteria will be part of an intellectual equipment he has had to gather for himself. (It need hardly be stated that we are dealing here with definitely Catholic matters as apart from the more vague and general Christian formation.) What we mean may be summarized by saying that while the convert may, and often will, have a more

correct Catholic judgement than the hereditary Catholic, his judgement will always be a more deliberately achieved decision than the hereditary Catholic's need be.

Granted, then, the existence of this instinct, we may see how its activity causes difficulties. Often the convert will meet an attitude on some particular question and ask in vain for an explanation of it. The Catholic who holds it endures the mortification of acknowledging, at least to himself, that he does not know its basis! Or the convert will have what seems to be a perfectly reasonable attitude which is opposed by the hereditary Catholic who is unable to state precisely why he opposes it; he just knows that somehow or other it conflicts with his sense of fitness. It is a severe strain on charity when one has to bow before inexplicable opposition, and it falls not infrequently on the convert who finds himself, in his zeal, up against this instinct for right and wrong, for good and better.

There is another consequence: the hereditary Catholic is aware that the convert's Faith, while certainly a gift from God, is a much more intellectual thing than his own need be, than his own, very often, is. He has to be on his guard, therefore, lest he betray the fact! Nothing else nearly so adequately explains the "stand-offish" attitude of many hereditary Catholics to converts and the existence of little circles closed against disturbers of peace of mind. It is a simple consequence of the fact that if you ask a convert why he is keen to reintroduce the Sarum Rite, or prohibit all vernacular services, he will have a reason ready; while, if you ask a hereditary Catholic why he agrees or opposes, the chances are he will be unable to say. Knowing this, the latter shows some shrewdness in keeping out of the way of demands for explanations!

V

Our final consideration, closely connected with the foregoing, concerns the question of rigidity. Converts are usually much more rigid than hereditary Catholics both in their interpretation of the law and in their adherence to definite spiritual methods. One reason for this may be indicated by an analogy.

Those who have grown up in a household behave with greater freedom than those who have been introduced into the domestic circle after their years of childhood; they know which rules are inviolable, which are less important; they are familiar with the permissive and prohibitory customs of the family; they know where and when they dare take liberties, and where and when they may not. As a result, they move freely (thoughtlessly, even) and untroubled in and about the house and garden while the newcomer picks his way with care and observes the very *minutiae* of etiquette and decorum.

Every metaphor limps—and this one will limp badly if it implies the existence of any inferiority of the newcomer's status; nor must it imply the sort of difference that exists between blood children and children by adoption. What difference there is can be no more than one of time; all have been adopted, some today and some yesterday. Take it, if you like, that those of later adoption have been admitted to compensate for the disappointments caused by earlier arrivals!

The convert, then, may differ from the hereditary Catholic in his more scrupulous observance of what the latter considers relatively unimportant directions, and he may be shocked by the latter's free-and-easy attitude to regulations, just as the English Catholic is usually shocked by the Latin Catholic's still greater external disregard of the law. One may condemn what he considers dangerous laxity in the other, who, *per contra*, is intolerant of what seems to him morbid legalism or fanaticism.

If we are to have many converts as a result of the spiritual and material upheaval of these days, *quod placeat Deo*, it is our duty to prepare for them by making an effort to understand and remove the difficulties they will encounter and we shall share with them. The need for this effort is not new, it always existed; but the state of the world makes it imperative that nothing be left undone which might lessen or remove these difficulties. The Church has need of every soul God will bring to live happily and fruitfully in His Household, that by our co-operation in Grace Christianity may survive where chaos is threatening, and Christ triumph over deified man.

We have done no more than indicate some of the many aspects of a thorny problem and it may be suggested that little good has been done if nothing constructive is proposed. The criticism is valid and must be anticipated.

Clearly, although the problem affects many, it is essentially an individual one. It must be solved, therefore, by individuals, and their chief contribution to the solution will consist in personal effort to understand and make allowance for what we may call the spiritual make-up of new-found brethren. The convert must try not to be shocked or discouraged by our apparent lethargy and even boredom; charity demands that we show sympathy for the anxious zeal of the convert. From the convert we can take new encouragement, new ideas, new inspiration to action; from us the convert should receive at least a welcome which will never permit him to feel a stranger, and all we can possibly transmit of the Catholic sense which is our heritage, and, therefore, his too.

Convert priests and religious are taking an important part in the work of the Church in England, and from the Beda and other colleges come constant reinforcements to ensure that the work which they alone, perhaps, can do will not be left undone. The encouragement and facilitation of "convert vocations" is within the reach of us all; we can at least pray for

these vocations and, as our circumstances permit, help those who are trying to overcome material obstacles.

Convert layfolk must be more fully absorbed into our many Catholic organizations and none should be unable to find some work for which he has the necessary gifts and the inclination. There should be no lack of enterprise in recruitment on the part of these societies, and it is surely not too much to ask that each of them should not measure its yearly success and progress without attaching special importance to the number of active convert members brought into the work during the period.

J. LEO MCGOVERN.

HOMILETICS

Second Sunday of Advent

(The Person of John the Baptist)

THE Gospels of the last three Sundays of Advent all have reference to John the Baptist; it would seem that the Church wishes to focus our attention on the great figure of the Precursor, to recall to us, in these days of preparation for Christmas, the message he brought to the Jews just before Our Lord appeared among them to begin His public life. We are apt to overlook John the Baptist, and few of us really appreciate how prominent a position he occupies in the Gospel narrative. This is, perhaps, natural enough. When we read the Gospels, we do so in order to glean from them all that they can convey of the life, the teaching, the person of Jesus, the Son of God made Man; and every other character in the inspired record is dwarfed by comparison with Him. John himself, moreover, would have had it so: "He must increase, but I must decrease," he said to his own disciples. But this should not make us forget his former greatness, nor Our Lord's own testimony to him: "There hath not risen among them that are born of women a greater than John the Baptist."

It is perhaps not too much to say that, after Our Lord Himself, John the Baptist stands out as the most prominent figure in the Gospel story. We have the most minute details concerning the miraculous circumstances of his birth, his mission, and the martyr's death which crowned his faithful service. More than once, in speaking to the Jews, Jesus appealed to the testimony of John; and the most magnificent eulogy He ever uttered is that tribute to the Precursor which we read in today's Gospel.

The life of the Precursor, in its general outline, affords a remarkable parallel with that of Our Lord Himself. His birth was miraculous, and was foretold by an angel; after a detailed account of these events, the Gospels sum up the following years in a single sentence: "The child was in the desert" just as Our Lord's hidden life is summed up in the words: "He went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and was subject to them." Then we have in detail the story of his ministry; and finally, we read how, like His Divine Master, he sealed his mission with his blood, the victim of the hatred aroused by his fearless denunciation of evil in high places.

His sudden appearance beside the Jordan created a tremendous impression on his fellow-countrymen. They remembered the strange circumstances that had marked his birth, when people already asked each other: "What an one, think ye, shall this child be?" Now he stood before them, a gaunt figure like one of the prophets of old, with long, untrimmed hair and beard, his emaciated features lit up by the flame that consumed his ardent soul; and his voice rang out with all the authority and conviction of one who knew himself to be inspired from on high. They knew the

manner of life he had led, far from the pleasant haunts of men, in the arid wastes of the desert; how he had practised such austerities that, as St. Gregory remarks, one might well wonder how any human frame could support them. And so, drawn by deep faith or mere idle curiosity, they flocked to the Jordan's banks to see and hear this new prophet in Israel; when Our Lord, in today's Gospel, speaks to the Jews, He is able to take for granted that they have all seen the Precursor: "What went ye out to see . . .?"

Jesus goes on to testify to John's courage and austerity. He was, in truth, no "reed shaken by the wind" of opposition and disapproval; he denounced the Pharisees in no measured terms, and condemned the evil life of Herod. This latter was, as he well knew, a dangerous proceeding in a land where Herod's word was law, and in days when a man's life was at the mercy of a ruler's lightest whim. He was well aware that his outspoken condemnation might, as in fact it did, cost him his life; but his courage, born of fiery zeal and utter devotion to his mission, did not falter. The Jews had seen for themselves that John was not a "man clothed in soft garments"; his rough tunic of camel's hair, bound with a leathern girdle, bore testimony to that mortified life of which all Palestine had heard the rumour.

They had revered him as a saintly man, as a prophet who spoke to them in divinely inspired accents; and they were right. But he was "a prophet, and more than a prophet"; he was not merely to speak to them of the future Messiah, but to show Him to them in the flesh; the Scriptures themselves spoke of him and his unique mission, for this was "he of whom it is written: Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee".

Such was John the Baptist—a mighty figure, a giant of sanctity even when measured by those higher standards which, in Our Lord's teaching, were to replace the ancient morality of the Law of Moses. Across twenty centuries, he creates in us the same profound impression as he did in the Jews during those last days of the Old Dispensation. Listening to him, as the Church wishes us to do during the next three weeks, we cannot but be moved by that solemn injunction: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." We, too, are in the days of preparation; and blessed shall we be if our preparation is painstaking and diligent. For four thousand years God prepared the world for the coming of His Son, and we have only a few short days. Let each one of us answer to himself—if we had stood beside the Jordan, and looked on the awe-inspiring figure of the Baptist, and heard that urgent message, could we have answered with the Psalmist: "My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready"? If not, there is work for us to do before this Christmas Eve. Let us ask St. John, who in Heaven is still the Precursor, whose prerogative it will always be, as long as a human heart shall beat, to make men ready for the coming of their Lord, let us ask him that in our souls "the crooked may be made straight, and the rough

ways plain", so that we too may be privileged to "see the salvation of God", the Word made flesh, and offer Him a fit dwelling-place within us.

Third Sunday of Advent

(The Mission of John the Baptist)

It was a solemn moment when Zachary, father of John the Baptist, miraculously recovered the power of speech and broke out into a hymn of praise. The friends and relatives who had gathered for the circumcision of his son listened with awe to the inspired words of the venerable old man; and they knew beyond doubt that God spoke in him, when he suddenly addressed the tiny child, and with prophetic vision described his future mission: "And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest; for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways; to give knowledge of salvation to His people unto the remission of their sins . . . to enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to direct our feet into the way of peace." Years later, men remembered these words, when John left the solitary places of the desert where he had dwelt so long, and came to the banks of the Jordan to preach and to baptise.

For so exalted a rôle a long preparation was necessary. At the age of five, so tradition tells us, John left his father's house and vanished into the desert land that lay between Jerusalem and Hebron. Twenty-five years later he reappeared, and began at once to preach penance and to baptize all those who came to him. This baptism was a new thing, and St. Thomas gives several reasons to explain why John was inspired to introduce it: first, because Our Lord's baptism at the hands of John was to consecrate this rite as a Sacrament of the New Law; secondly, men would, in the meantime, become accustomed to it as something sacred and ordained by God; it was easier and more expeditious for the Precursor to point out the Messiah to the Jews when they came in crowds to be baptized; and lastly, the spirit of repentance demanded by the baptism of John disposed them to recognize more easily their promised Redeemer and listen to His teaching.

While he spent his days in thus preparing the people, John himself was waiting for the Messiah to appear: "I knew him not; but He, who sent me to baptize with water, said to me: He upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining upon him, he it is that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw; and I gave testimony, that this is the Son of God." That day when Jesus was baptized marks the end of the first period of John's mission; henceforward he would no longer be merely "the voice of one crying in the wilderness: Make straight the way of the Lord", for in that moment of revelation he had recognized his Lord—the

days of prophecy were ended, and the Gospel era had begun, so that St. Thomas says that John was "*terminus legis, et initium Evangelii*".

There came a day when John, walking with his disciples, saw Jesus approaching. That moment marked the climax of his mission. He had warned the Jews again and again: "The kingdom of God is at hand"; now the Messiah in person stood before them, and it only remained for the Precursor to point Him out to them and reveal His identity in words which could leave no room for doubt or hesitation. "Behold the Lamb of God; behold him who taketh away the sin of the world."

His work done, the Precursor began to withdraw from public view, seeking to transfer the allegiance of his disciples from himself to Jesus: "He must increase, but I must decrease." Not long afterwards, he was thrown into prison, and died a martyr's death; faithful to the end, he sacrificed his life, as he had sacrificed everything else, for the sake of his mission.

John was the herald of Our Lord's first coming to His people; but the Redeemer has a second Advent in each individual soul, and to each He must be announced and made known; so that today the rôle of Precursor is multiplied a thousandfold. It is realized more particularly in all those responsible for the education of children. Education does not consist in cramming a child's brain with a mass of facts and figures; book-knowledge is only one branch of education, not the whole of it. It consists rather in the gradual development and training of those marvellous faculties given by God to man, until the child attains the full perfection of its human nature; in other words, as the term itself indicates, education is not so much a "putting in" as a "drawing out". Now, without the knowledge of God, the human intelligence lacks its full development; missing its highest object, confined to the narrow limits of mere material things, it remains, despite much learning and keen penetration, stunted in its growth and denied its widest expansion. In the same way, the human will is perfected only by the practice of virtue, and there can be no true virtue without the knowledge and love of God. Hence the essential duty of parents and teachers is to instruct those entrusted to their care in the truths of religion; to tell them of God, of their eternal destiny, of the Redeemer Who died for them; in a word, to present Jesus to them, as John presented Him to those who had so long awaited Him, and thus ensure that these pure souls grow in the warm light of truth, as the flowers unfold their petals in the rays of the sun.

But we can all, when opportunity offers, play the part of Precursor to some poor soul still "in darkness and in the shadow of death". There are millions of such souls in this land of ours and in this "enlightened" twentieth century; and their darkness is all the more pitiable and the more profound because they call it the light of a new day. To bring those around us, for whom Christmas has lost all meaning, to the knowledge of the Redeemer Who came on earth that He might die for them; to drive away

the shadows of ignorance and unbelief and cause to shine into their souls the glorious brightness of the star of Bethlehem—this should be our ambition, and may sometimes be our duty. We, who have the true faith, should have the zeal of John the Baptist for imparting it to others; all of us, by the fact that we are Christians, should be eager, as he was, to “give testimony of the light, that all men might believe”.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

(The Message of John the Baptist)

Day after day, on the banks of the Jordan, a motley gathering of Jews assembled to hear the teaching of John the Baptist. Most noticeable among them were the Pharisees, who remained aloof from the common herd and, though they missed nothing of what was said and done, made it clear by their attitude that they took no part in the proceedings. John had not sought their approval for his new rite of baptism, of which there was no mention in the Law of Moses; and what had they, the sinless ones, noted and admired by all for their perfect observance of the law, what had they to do with repentance? But the rest of the people stood in reverent silence, listening to the voice which in burning words conveyed to them a message from on high. For four hundred years, ever since the death of Malachias, the voice of prophecy had been silent in Israel; now God was speaking to them again, and they rejoiced that He had not forgotten His chosen people.

Yet the burden of John's message was no pleasant one. Man has never welcomed the reminder of his many faults, and nature instinctively rebels against a call to penance. The theme had been a familiar one on the lips of the prophets, for the whole history of Israel, as recorded in the sacred writings, had been a succession of lapses into infidelity, followed invariably by punishment and repentance. But now there was a new note in the oft-repeated exhortation. It was not by any threat of punishment that John sought to bring them to penance; if he urged them to be cleansed from their sins, it was in order to prepare themselves for the great events which were soon to take place. “The Kingdom of God is at hand”—this could mean only one thing, namely that the long-awaited Messiah, the promised Prince and Leader of the sadly fallen House of David, was soon to appear among them; and with simple, lively faith and genuine sorrow for their faults they went down into the waters of the Jordan and received “the baptism of penance for the remission of sins”.

All true penance includes a resolution of amendment; and there is no more touching scene in all John's ministry than that in which all categories of the common people approach him in turn to ask his guidance for their

future conduct. To all of them he recommends charity: "He that hath two coats, let him give to him that hath none, and he that hath meat, let him do in like manner." St. Luke mentions two classes of men in particular, the publicans and the soldiers, because these were considered by the Jews, probably with good reason, as the lowest of all occupations, in which a man could hardly live without sin. It is interesting to note that the Baptist's advice always follows the same lines—he does not require them to give up their profession, but only to do their duty conscientiously and respect the rights of others. His precise words show that he was well aware of the usual faults which had made their name a byword among the people, and we catch a vivid glimpse of the conditions of the time; he told the publicans to exact no more than the taxes prescribed by law, while to the soldiers he said: "Do violence to no man, neither calumniate any man: and be content with your pay."

The Baptist's message has its application today. We, too, are awaiting the coming of the Redeemer, and we have as much reason to prepare our souls as had the Jews of old; we should be asking, as they did, what we must do so that at His coming we may be worthy to benefit by His presence among us. In the message of John the Baptist we find our answer. For us, as for the people of Israel, the first duty is repentance; we have all sinned, for as St. John bluntly tells us: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." He Who comes to us on Christmas night in the guise of our frail humanity is the God of all sanctity, in Whose sight the angels themselves are not pure; and dare we invite Him to dwell in a soul where sin still holds sway? But we can take it for granted that, by the grace of God, we have true sorrow for our sins and that the Sacrament of Penance will have cleansed us, before He comes, from the last stain of guilt; what further preparation do we need? We are not asked to leave our ordinary occupations, to retire from the world in order to give ourselves to prayer and mortification. God's work in our souls is not so dependent on circumstances of place and condition. We have only to continue to do our duty in the sphere where God's Providence has placed us; looking, perhaps, more closely than before at our various obligations, and fulfilling them more exactly; showing greater kindness to those around us; praying more frequently and with greater fervour. Was it not all Our Lord Himself asked of His disciples, that a man should faithfully perform the task his Lord had set him? "Who thinkest thou is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath appointed over his family, to give them meat in season? Blessed is that servant, whom when his lord shall come, he shall find so doing."

The time is short—in a few days we shall be celebrating once more the birth of the God-made Man. Let us begin now, or redouble our efforts if we have already begun. On His first night on earth, men had no place for Him; on this Christmas night, may He find a sanctuary in our hearts, with the light of faith and the warmth of love to bid Him welcome.

The Holy Innocents

In this world, it can be a dangerous thing to belong to Christ. The holy man Simeon, when at last he held the Redeemer in his arms, followed his ecstatic burst of prayer with a prophetic warning: "This child is set for the fall, and for the resurrection of many in Israel, and for a sign which shall be contradicted"; and from the moment of His first public appearance thirty years later, fierce controversy raged around the person of the Messiah. All men, in all ages, have taken sides for or against Him. No king or leader has commanded such utter devotion, such selfless loyalty on the part of his followers, or excited such blind, savage hatred in his enemies. When men's passions are roused to this pitch, someone is bound to suffer, and Jesus warned His disciples that they would have to bear the full weight of the world's antagonism.

Today's feast commemorates the first victims of that persecution which was to cause rivers of blood to flow, and stain with red every foot of ground where the Cross of Christ would be planted. The Holy Innocents are unique among the martyrs whom the Church has raised to her altars. They died for Christ, or better still, alone among the martyrs, they died instead of Him, without ever having known Him. They received the crown of martyrdom when, in the ordinary course of nature, they were too young to realize what it meant. Their lives were taken before they were capable of that supreme act of freewill by which a man gives his life for God in order to receive it again at His hands, glorious and eternal. The Church has emphasized this point in a delightful verse of the Breviary hymn for the feast, where she shows us the Holy Innocents, children still for all the glory that surrounds them, playing with their martyrs' palms and crowns at the foot of the throne of God as if on a nursery floor.

The act of deliberate, cold-blooded cruelty, which even today makes us shudder as we read the brief unemotional account of it in St. Matthew, had long been foreshadowed. David, in the first of his prophetic psalms, had spoken of the kings who would persecute the Messiah: "The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together, against the Lord and against his Christ." St. Matthew, in today's Gospel, finds an indirect prophecy of the event in the words of Jeremiah, where Rachel, mother of all Israel, is represented as lamenting over the future ruin and captivity of the Jewish people. The application of this prophecy to the slaughter of the Innocents is all the more easy and the more dramatic because Rachel was buried only a mile from Bethlehem, so that we seem to see her roused from the long sleep of death as the silence of the tomb is broken by the tramp of soldiery, the clash of arms, the cries of children snatched away by brutal hands, the weeping of bereaved mothers; and her voice swells the chorus of "lamentation and great mourning; Rachel bewailing her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not".

It is natural enough that the Church should have placed this feast so near to Christmas, for there is a direct connection between the birth of Christ and the death of the children of Bethlehem. But the sudden transition from the joy of Our Lord's Nativity to the mourning of today is full of deep significance. It illustrates in striking fashion, from the first days of Our Saviour's earthly career, the central truth of all Christianity—our redemption through suffering. The Son of God became man in order that He might be able to suffer and die; and all who are associated with Him in that work of redemption, or merely share in its fruits, come under the same law of suffering. As the sun concentrates in itself the maximum of light and heat, and diffuses them through the entire solar system, reaching even to the most distant star, so in Christ suffering is concentrated in its fiercest intensity, and passes from Him to all those who come under His influence.

To all outward appearance, the link between Jesus and the infant martyrs was of the slenderest, consisting in the mere fact that the time and place of their birth coincided more or less exactly with His. Yet this was enough, and because of it they had to die. What then would it be for those who knew Him, who believed in Him and openly proclaimed themselves His followers? The history of the Church tells us that the nearer men have been to Him, the more closely they have followed Him, the greater has been their share of His sufferings. Nearest of all to Him was His Mother; and Mary is the Queen of Martyrs, the Mother of Sorrows, whose soul knew agonies which only a miracle enabled her to endure. The Apostles whom He chose to spread His name across the world had toil and danger for their daily portion, and death by martyrdom was the reward of their service. Martyrs in thousands were ostracized, imprisoned, tortured, put to death with every cruelty that human ingenuity could devise. Virgins and Confessors, down through the centuries, have given themselves unreservedly to His service, gladly accepting the essential condition of that service: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily." There are many Saints in Heaven, and their paths through life were varied—but these many paths are in reality only one, the rough road along which their Master passed as He went to Calvary. One of them, with that holy freedom which so amazes us in the Saints, said to Our Lord one day, after a particularly severe period of suffering: "Ah, Lord, it is not surprising that You have so few friends, if this is how You treat them!"

We are not called to the heroic endurance of the Saints and Martyrs, for God knows our weakness and is satisfied with the little of which we are capable. Yet we are followers of Christ, though we follow Him only from afar; we belong to Him, though we cannot lay claim to the intimacy enjoyed by His more generous servants. In our own small measure, therefore, we are bound to share His sufferings, for the law is universal and admits of no exceptions: "If any man will come after Me, let him take up his cross."

There is no easy way of salvation, for all roads to Heaven lead over Calvary. Fidelity to Our Divine Lord will not exempt us from the ordinary trials of life, as lukewarm Catholics often seem to think it should do. Our fidelity may even involve difficulties and pains from which others are exempt; thus many a business man would be more prosperous if he adopted the corrupt methods of his rivals, many a professional man would be assured of a greater career if he exchanged Catholicism for Freemasonry, and all the Catholics of England would find life easier if they had not to bear the burden which assures a Catholic education for their children. In many ways, the following of a crucified Master may be fatal to our earthly comfort and prosperity. The Holy Innocents suffered only a moment's pang, but we may be asked to bear for years the galling weight of the Cross of Christ. Yet we must not lose heart, for He will be with us. He, Who knows so well how heavy a cross can be, will measure our burden to our failing strength, will revive our flagging courage. United with Him, as we have been during these last few days, in the joys of Bethlehem; united with Him in the weariness and pain of the Way of the Cross; we have the firm hope, the glad assurance that we shall be united with Him in the glory of His Heavenly Kingdom: "For that which is at present momentary and light of our tribulation, worketh for us above measure exceedingly an eternal weight of glory."

THOMAS B. FINAN, C.S.Sp.

DOCTRINE FOR CHILDREN

I

THE TEACHING OF HYMNS

THE main purpose in teaching hymns in school is to enable children to express their feelings of love, praise, and devotion in song. So on earth they perform the eternal task of the child-like of heart in Heaven :

*Quocumque tendis virgines
Sequuntur atque laudibus
Post te canentes cursitant
Hymnosque dulces personant.*

Of the musical part of that task it is for the expert to write and (as is customary in the harmony of musical experts) for his fellow expert to disagree with what has been written. Music, however, is not the only objective in teaching hymns. Hymns are prayers and prayers can be as well said in the uncultured, uneducated tones of the rustic as in the classic diction of the university. The popular use of hymns has been exploited almost to derision by the Salvation Army and the Revivalists, but their work at least teaches us to consider the fundamental appeal of the hymn and its place and value in our religious scheme. This is no plea for popular airs for hymn tunes or for catchy phrases in the pulpit. We should strive to make the public services of our churches as near to perfection in dignity and beauty as human art can reach, but hymns for public services should not be the only ones in the teacher's mind. School songs are not taught for public presentation but for their value (whatever it may be) to the children themselves. There are many values other than that of public singing to be found in the teaching of hymns.

First of all hymns are prayers. Canon Sheehan in *Luke Delmege* tells of a stable-boy who used as his act of contrition D. F. MacCarthy's exquisite translation of the Lay of the Sacred Heart with its haunting lines :

Is it not, O Christ ! O King ! a cruel, cruel thing
That naught has been loved by me
Save sins that the soul defile, save all things base and vile
That are loathsome unto Thee ?

The fiction was drawn from fact. Many a grown-up still prepares for Communion by murmuring "Jesus ! Thou art coming, Holy as Thou art" which he learned as a "Hymn for Children", or begins his day by reciting, not necessarily singing, "Soul of my Saviour, sanctify my breast". Isolated phrases from hymns often form part of a man's favourite prayers. To hear a fellow Briton muttering

Mother of Christ, Star of the Sea,
Pray for the sinner, pray for me,

as he tackled his job in the height of the blitz would have delighted the heart of stout old John Lingard. Most of our stock hymns, indeed, even if never sung, are worth teaching to children to help them to pray; most of them provide at least some lines which can be used as ejaculatory prayers: all of them can help to increase the child's stock of words and ideas for prayer.

Secondly, hymns are mnemonics. Verse is easier to memorize than prose and has a knack of recurring to the mind all through life. Our Victorian ancestors realized this and although it is fashionable now to scoff at "Dr. Watts' Advice to Young Pugilists", and to quote such puerilities as

Little children be ye careful
Not to let your passions rise,
Your little hands were never made
To tear each other's eyes,

it is surprising how the jingles cling to the memory and how, maybe, the little lessons cling with them.

Moralizing in poetry was popular with the poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Nowadays most children and many adults find Pope, Grey, Cowper and their like ineffably boring but still the "tags" cling. Speech-makers still quote

A wit's a feather and a chief's a rod
An honest man's the noblest work of God

and

Know then this truth, enough for man to know
Virtue alone is happiness below,

and a hundred other wise saws of the Augustans. Some day some literary philosopher will write a thesis tracing the influence of all this catch-phrase philosophy in fashioning the popular morality of the masses, but for the teacher of religion the theory matters little. The fact is sufficient that truths learned in verse have a habit of sticking where the dry prose formulae are forgotten. Nearly all our hymns contain a doctrinal lesson, sometimes in extraordinary brevity and clarity of phrase. We can use them not only as aids to memory but to teach the doctrines themselves.

Of course to overdo this sort of work or to lose sight of the primary end of teaching hymns would be a grave mistake. The primary end, however, can be achieved and the secondary ends not forgotten by making a judicious selection of hymns. It has been suggested more than once that every religion lesson should end with a prayer. To try to end every religion lesson with a suitable hymn would soon tax both the ingenuity and the time of the teacher. Suitable hymns can, however, be found to summarize the main divisions of the doctrine, whether these be taken as sections of a syllabus or chapters of the Catechism. A few examples may help to suggest the lines for a complete scheme:

Doctrine.

First article of the Creed.
 Second article of the Creed.
 Third article of the Creed.
 The Immaculate Conception.
 Ninth article of the Creed.
 The Primacy of the Pope.
 Sacrament of Penance.
 Contrition.
 Temptation.
 The Rule of Life.
 The Commandments.

Hymn

Holy God.
 Praise to the Holiest.
 See, amid the Winter's snow.
 O Purest of Creatures.
 Who is she that stands.
 Full in the panting heart of Rome.
 O Come to the Merciful Saviour.
 God of mercy and compassion.
 I nothing fear with Jesus at my side.
 Lord for tomorrow and its needs.
 O God of earth and altar.

Lessons on the doctrines commemorated in the feasts and seasons of the Liturgical Year may be summed up by reading or learning the Breviary hymns. A wide selection of these is to be found in the new Westminster Hymnal.

Teaching children how to sing hymns is a musician's job. Teaching hymns to children is any teacher's job. Hymns are poems and the same rules and methods apply in teaching them as in teaching poetry. The worst way, as in teaching poetry, is to drag children through a word-by-word paraphrase, but any of the other stock methods—"building up the poem", "working from a setting", "seeing the pictures", etc.—will serve the end. Even the simple "discussion" method where the class reads each verse and tells the teacher what it means and what ideas it suggests to them, can serve a useful purpose—many, *pace* the experts, still think it the best method of all. Whatever method be used, the end is the same in all, to get children not only to understand but to feel what they are saying when they recite or sing.

If the teaching of the hymn follows a doctrine lesson, the teacher can easily anticipate the verbal difficulties by using and explaining the difficult words of the hymn in the course of the lesson. If the hymn-lesson stands on its own, the teacher must be careful to select only hymns whose ideas and words present but few difficulties. Otherwise the entire time will be spent on dull and unprofitable word-work. Pictures will often be almost necessary in teaching hymns to very young children. The language of poetry is normally rather strange to them and they need help to make the words come to life. It is not for nothing that poetry books for children are usually copiously illustrated, but how rarely, if ever, one sees an illustrated hymnal for children.

Teaching the singing is the natural ending to a lesson on a hymn, but where this is not possible individual or choral recitation may take its place. It is surprising what beautiful effects can be produced by well-directed choral recitation of poetry: the same should be true of choral recitation of hymns.

It would be interesting to hear from an expert how the actual teaching

of the singing of hymns should be done. His task would certainly be made easier and more effective by preparatory work such as we have outlined.

II

LESSONS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

First week: The Communion of Saints; The Church Triumphant.

(1) Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost. Bonds that should bind Christians on earth (Gradual): Charity (Epistle); Justice (Gospel). C.Q. 103.

(2) The Communion of Saints: Matt. v, 1-12; meaning of "saint" (one who is in sanctifying grace); the "Saints" (those whom the Church declares to have died in that state); grace the bond that unites them to each other and to Christ. C.Q. 102.

(3) The Church Triumphant: Apoc. vii, 7-17. Meaning of canonization; types of saints and of sanctity. C.Q. 104.

(4) Our communion with the Saints: prayers to them; statues and relics; imitation of their virtues. C.Q. 104, 158, 159.

(5) One of the following hymns: New Westminster Hymnal, Nos. 124, 127, 143, 145, 158; Old W.H., Nos. 186, 196, 197.

Second week: The Communion of Saints; The Church Suffering.

(1) Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost, Dedication of Archbasilica of Our Saviour. Christ wishes all to be saints: The joys of Heaven (Epistle), Christ comes to all who seek Him (Gospel).

(2) Death, the lot of all men: the Rich Fool, Luke xii, 16-20; punishment of sin of Adam; need of preparation; Penance and Extreme Unction.

(3) The Church Suffering: Purgatory; nature, who are there, etc. C.Q. 106, 107, 108.

(4) Our communion with the souls in Purgatory: 2 Macc. xii; how they help us; how we can help them; indulgences. C.Q. 105, 108, 300.

(5) One of the following hymns: New W.H., 160, 162; Old W.H., 132, 134.

Third week: The Communion of Saints; The Church Militant.

(1) Sixth Sunday after Epiphany. Our part in the Communion of Saints: Good example spreads the faith (Epistle); from little seeds the Church spreads (Gospel); no one's work is insignificant if done for God.

(2) To do our part we must love God and keep His Commandments: Luke x, 25-7; love of God means loving our religion and hating sin. C.Q. 333-8, 348-54.

(3) We must help our neighbours in the Communion of Saints: Luke x, 29-37. C.Q. 103, 339-41.

- (4) Christ is our model and our help : Luke ix, 22-7 ; we must imitate Him ; we must use the helps He gives in the Sacraments. C.Q. 342-7.
 (5) The hymn "Faith of our Fathers".

Fourth week : The Resurrection of the Body : Life Everlasting.

(1) Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost : "The lot of the Saints in light" : The life of a saint on earth (Epistle) ; The Second Coming of Christ (Gospel).

(2) The General Judgement : based on the Sequence "Dies Irae"—description of the day of wrath ; the Judge ; the Book and what it will contain ; our hope in that hour.

(3) Heaven : Apoc. xxi, 1-7 ; The beautiful things of this life but shadows of the joys of Heaven ; its chief happiness is the possession of God ; God's reward to His Saints. C.Q. 131, 132, 133.

(4) Hell : Matt. xxv, 41-6. Sin punished in proportion to its malice ; the Justice of God. C.Q. 134.

(5) After Christ, our greatest help and hope for salvation is in the Mother of God ; She is pledged to help us even by miracles ; Feast of the Miraculous Medal, 27 November.

III

SPECIMEN LESSON ON A HYMN ("Faith of our Fathers")

Introduction : Teacher gives a short talk on the Penal Days : the cause of the troubles—the attack on the supremacy of the Pope—the first martyrs under Henry VIII—the persecutions under Edward VI, Elizabeth and James I—the "Church in the Catacombs again"—why our fathers suffered—meaning of suffering for "the Faith".

The hymn is then read aloud by the teacher, the children following it in their books.

(1) *First verse.*

Children are told of the deaths which some of our *Fathers* suffered for the *Faith* ; of B. John Davy and his companions who were starved to death and of V. Anthony Brorby who was strangled, in their *dungeons* ; of B. John Forest, burned by *fire* at Smithfield ; of St. John Fisher, St. Thomas More, and B. Thomas Percy who suffered by the *sword*. Children read the first verse slowly and are questioned on it, e.g. Why should we be *glad* because of their sufferings ? , etc.

(2) *Second verse.*

The imprisonment of St. Thomas More is described—his cheerfulness, his constancy, and his calm joy at suffering for the faith are stressed ; Children are told of the three hundred and sixty martyrs who suffered in *prisons dark* before their executions, of the horrors of the rack and of the

awful method of execution. They then read the second verse and are questioned, e.g. How can we call such death *sweet*?, etc.

(3) *Third verse.*

The devotion of England to Our Lady in pre-Reformation times is described; "Our Lady's Dowry"; the pilgrimage to Walsingham; the idea of England as the "land of the free" is discussed and the notions of freedom from sin and freedom to serve God are explained. Children read the verse and are questioned on it.

(4) *Fourth verse.*

The scene of St. John Fisher praying for his executioners on the scaffold is described. Children are told we must hate nobody. We may hate the evil that they do and try to stop it, but we must fight against bitterness in our own hearts; Christ praying for His executioners is described. Children are told that we must not hate the enemies of our Church but rather must show our love for them by praying for their conversion; to achieve this we must set them an example. At first they will only know the Church through us; our lives must preach Christ to them. Children read the verse and are questioned on it, e.g. Give an example of preaching by *kindly words*, etc.

Conclusion.

(a) The Resolution—"We will be true to thee till death"; what it means—true to the beliefs of the Church, true to the practices of the Church. Sometimes it may be hard (Sunday rising, scoffs of others, etc.), but not so hard as what our Fathers suffered.

(b) The big test, our Fathers' test, may come some day. We must prepare for it by a habit of loyalty now. Children are asked to suggest positive ways of showing their loyalty to the Church, open profession of faith, etc.

(c) To be true to the Faith, we must not be selfish. We ~~must~~ help others. We must work for the conversion of England by our prayers, by our devotion to Our Lady, by our devotion to our Martyrs and by making our own lives worthy of the family tradition.

Children sing or recite the hymn.

Note.—Instead of the Saints mentioned in this list, schools may prefer to use the lives of local saints or the saints of the month. Details of these with a full chronological list of our martyrs can be found in the C.T.S. pamphlet H.163, "Our Martyrs". The following Beati were martyred in November: Richard Whiting, John Thorne, Roger James, George Napier (9th), Hugh Faringdon (15th), Edward Osbaldston (16th), Hugh Taylor, Marmaduke Bowes (26th), James Thompson (28th), George Errington, William Gibson, William Knight, Cuthbert Mayne (29th).

JAMES M. THOMPSON, C.M.

NOTES ON RECENT WORK

MORAL THEOLOGY

THE publication in book form of the various war-time addresses given by His Eminence Cardinal Hinsley was warmly welcomed by Catholics and non-Catholics alike, and the work has already been reviewed in this journal, 1941, XXI, p. 120. It is, indeed, gratifying to our comparatively small body in this country to possess, in these difficult times, a leader who is regarded with universal respect and admiration. The Nazis, of course, view the Cardinal with abhorrence, but their peculiar ideas on the proper sphere of the Church in national life are accepted by none outside their own ranks, and least of all by the German Hierarchy.

In these addresses, broadcast and otherwise, His Eminence has brought to bear on the masses of the people the strength of his own faith, persuading them loyally to assist the country in the present crisis, urging them to constant prayer for the success of our cause, and encouraging them to bear with Christian fortitude and mutual charity the sufferings which have come upon them.

His Eminence, in the judgement of all, is particularly successful in his broadcasts. It is fairly common whenever someone has done a piece of work well, whether it be a speech or a violin recital or any kind of "turn", for people to ascribe it all to a "gift". The Cardinal, it is often said, has a gift for broadcasting. We may be permitted to observe that the "gift" in this instance consists in a wide preparatory reading and study and in a meticulously careful composition of what is to be said, all involving an amount of labour and anxiety which no one who has never spoken on the wireless can properly appreciate. The whole hierarchy of this country recorded at their Low Week meeting this year their gratitude to the Cardinal for his magnificent leadership and expressed their loyal adherence and unwavering support. It seems to us a pity that this resolution was not printed on page 6 as a supplement to the united statement of the bishops issued in September 1939, and published at that time in the Catholic Press for the guidance of the faithful.

In formulating a doctrinal theory of the power claimed by the Church in politics, and temporal concerns generally, it must be remembered that in its own sphere—in the domain which is purely political—the authority of the State is supreme. This traditional principle, clearly formulated by Leo XIII in *Immortale Dei*, would cease to have any valid meaning if we were to encourage the idea that Catholic citizens should seek the guidance or approbation of the Church in matters purely political. On the contrary, it will generally be found that the bishops are extremely loth to intervene in politics, in the sense of directing the faithful to oppose the civil government or to support this or that political party; they use their influence only when civil laws or party programmes are harmful to the spiritual

interests of the Church. Whenever it can be done with a clear conscience, the whole weight of ecclesiastical authority in every country is rightly on the side of the *de facto* civil government, and there has rarely been an occasion in our country's history calling more clearly for this support than the present titanic struggle.

But quite often the authority of the Church does come into conflict with that of the State in matters which are partly spiritual and partly temporal, for example, in questions of marriage and education. Lest it should be imagined, as some of his Nazi critics suggest, that the Cardinal's attitude consists in blessing every governmental scheme, attention may be called to such statements as those on pages 54 and 116 which re-affirm our determination to secure a Catholic education for Catholic children, and to resist the growing influence of the State in the control of family life.

As His Grace, the Apostolic Delegate, said in his speech at Edinburgh, reported in the Catholic Press, 10 May, 1940: "The Church cannot resign herself to inactivity when the rights of individuals or families or communities are threatened by unwise or unjust government. . . . The Church is concerned with the promotion of Christian government. She is supremely independent of particular systems."

Of much greater delicacy is the question of the "indirect" power occasionally claimed by the Church in certain matters which appear, at first sight, to be purely temporal and therefore exclusively within the sphere of civil rulers or within the competence of Christian citizens to act as seems to them best. Examples of the use of this power are the famous *Non expedit*, whereby Pius IX and Leo XIII forbade Italian Catholics to vote, and the efforts made by the latter Pope in causing French Catholics to abandon attempts at restoring the monarchy. An excellent study of the political history of the Catholic Church, *The Papacy and the Modern State*, by F. R. Hoare, was published last year,¹ and a good summary of the doctrine of "indirect" power claimed by the Church may be read in *Dictionnaire Apologétique*, Vol. IV, col. 105 *seq.* A more recent example of this kind of intervention, which occasioned considerable adverse comment at the time, but is now seen to be entirely justified, is the condemnation by the Belgian bishops of the Rexist movement.²

What is the principle or theory justifying such intervention? It is that the Pope or the local Episcopate judges that certain tendencies or movements, though purely temporal in character, are hostile to the interests of the Church at a given time and in given circumstances; it may be considered, e.g. that a new political party will cleave the unity of Catholics and thereby damage the Church; the faithful are therefore directed to sacrifice their temporal preferences in politics for the sake of the greater

¹ Burns Oates & Washbourne, p. 392. 15s. Cf. Review in this journal, 1940, XIX p. 276.

² *Documentation Catholique*, 1937, XXXVII, bol. 720 *seq.* and col. 1471, note 2; cf. *L'autorité de la lettre pastorale des Evêques de Belgique*, by Canon Dermine in *Collations Tornacenses*, 1936-37, p. 217.

spiritual good of the Church. Whether such intervention is not only directive but an act of episcopal jurisdiction is, perhaps, a debatable question. The chief point, however, is that the right of ecclesiastical authority in such matters is wholly based on the fact that the spiritual interests of the Church, at least locally, are at stake.

It is, we suppose, unlikely that a situation of this character will arise in our time in this country. In any event the weighty words of the Bishop of Bruges in his Prosynodal address, 1937, are worth pondering: "Episcopi 'quos Spiritus Sanctus posuit regere Ecclesiam Dei', ex ipsa institutione divina regunt ecclesias particulares cum potestate ordinaria et immediata, utique sub auctoritate Romani Pontificis. Non sunt vicarii Summi Pontificis nec regit Papa Ecclesiam per Episcopos sed cum Episcopis. Hi nimirum docent et regunt suos fideles cum auctoritate propria et in suis dioecesibus sunt vicarii ipsius Christi, Capituli invisibilis totius Ecclesiae, cuius locum tenent. Addamus tandem et quidem insistendo, propter adjuncta hodierna nostrae regionis: Episcopi jure vocantur et sunt catholici, quoniam communionem et pacem habent cum Pontifice Romano, Capite visibili Ecclesiae catholicae. Fideles autem, non quia seipsos ita vocant sed quoniam ab Episcopis suis hoc nomine condecorantur, merito dicuntur et sunt catholici in quantum et donec pacem et communionem servant cum pastoribus suis."¹

Owing to the kindness of a colleague at Upholland who has lent the volumes, it is possible to give some account of the last two of the works mentioned in Vol. XIX, 1940, p. 253. Cappello's *Praxis Processualis*² is the most recent of several similar manuals designed for the assistance of the episcopal curia, and it is superior to its predecessors in two ways. We are given, in the first place, the appropriate procedure not only for marriage cases, but for others as well, e.g. for those affecting Holy Orders or for removing parish priests. The correct procedure in marriage cases has been clarified by the well-known Instruction issued by the *Congregation of the Sacraments*, 15 August, 1936, and various manuals, such as Benedetti, *Ordo Iudicialis*, or Lanier, *Guide Pratique de la Procédure Matrimoniale*, illustrate every stage of the process. Similarly, Suarez, *De Amotione Parochorum*, provides for every contingency that may arise when an Ordinary attacks the problem of removing an "irremovable" parish priest. One advantage of Cappello's *Praxis Processualis* is that both these processes and others as well are contained in one volume.

A second point in its favour is the provision of very complete "specimen" cases properly drawn up in the form required by the Roman Curia. Unless diocesan officials have had some experience in business of this kind, the practical knowledge can only be acquired by studying and imitating the *formulae* provided by Cappello and other canonists. Any number of *judgements* can be examined in the published volumes of Rota decisions,

¹ *Collationes Brugenses*, 1937, p. 381.

² Marietti, p. 221.

and the principles and theory of the law are contained in countless commentaries. But the proper conduct of a process from A to Z is not usually explained even by those canonists whose works are exceedingly voluminous. Cappello, whose writings are in the first rank amongst post-Code authors, has provided a most useful and practical manual, and not the least amongst its attractions is brevity and brightness. The cases worked out are, no doubt, fictitious, but they are more true to life than some others we have examined. When, for example, the Ordinary makes the first move by tactfully suggesting in a paternal manner that a parish priest's health indicates that a change is desirable, he receives the not wholly unexpected reply that, thanks be to God, the priest's health has never been better. Another, reproached for frequenting taverns, naturally replies that he may have entered a tavern once, or perhaps twice, but it was for the purpose of exercising his sacred ministry.

De Matrimonii Convalidatione, by Dr. C. J. Tallarico, O.F.M.,¹ is a thesis presented at the "Antonianum" for obtaining the doctorate in Canon Law. It is a useful and practical subject to choose for special study and the doctrine is accurately and clearly presented, but it is not a topic presenting any special problems in the legislation of the Code, and the writer could hardly be expected to touch upon the difficulties which exist in England, and perhaps in other countries, when a marriage comes up for revalidation which was previously contracted according to the rites of the established Church. In accordance with the conditions now rightly required in theses of this kind, the greater portion of the study deals with the past history of the subject.

The Code is itself very reticent about the position of assistant priests. There is Canon 476, §6, which states that their rights and duties are determined by diocesan statutes and by the directions of the Ordinary and of the parish priest, "sed, nisi aliud expresse caveatur, ipse (vicarius cooperator) debet ratione officii parochi vicem supplere eumque adiuvere in universo paroeciali ministerio, excepta applicatione Missae pro populo". We have, in addition to this rather unsatisfactory definition, a reply of the *Codex Commission*, 12 February, 1935,² to the effect that religious who are assistant priests are bound, from Canon 131, §3, to attend diocesan conferences, since they are included in the phrase "religiosi licet exempti curam animarum habentes". Relying chiefly on these two texts, expounded with the aid of a vast bibliographical apparatus, Dr. Bockey has published an important monograph.³ From the nature of an ecclesiastical office (*ratione officii* of Canon 476), it is maintained that the power of a "vicarius cooperator" is *ordinary*, a rather momentous conclusion which seems, at first sight, to obscure the difference between curate and parish priest. The author shows that this is not actually so, and although his view is rejected by Toso

¹ Rome, *Athenaeum Antonianum*, p. 187.

² CLERGY REVIEW, 1935, IX, p. 528.

³ *De Potestate Vicarii Cooperatoris*. Rome, Piazza Ponte S. Angelo.

and many other canonists, there is much to be said in its favour; but we must await the decision of the Codex Commission to which, we are informed, the question has been put.

It is well understood that the priestly obligation of maintaining inviolate the confessional secret is much more than that which attaches to any *secretum commissum*—it is in some sense or other *jure divino*. Fr. Culhane, C.S.S.R., in exploring the exact sense which ought to be given to this sacred obligation, laments that the treatment of the subject, even in the larger books, is almost exclusively casuistical,¹ and he sets out to establish the basis upon which this casuistry must stand. It is something essential to the Sacrament, which is concerned with those secrets of the heart which, except for the voluntary confession of a penitent, would be known to God alone. The priest as the instrument of Christ, as the judge of human souls acting in Christ's name, and as a mediator between God and man, receives as a sacramental secret something known to God alone, for the matter revealed is, metaphorically at least, a secret of the heart of which God alone has cognisance. The violation of this secret would be, therefore, a violation of the virtue of religion, a breach of the divine law which no circumstances whatever can justify. Following the teaching of St. Thomas and other mediaeval theologians, the author establishes his doctrine in this short printed extract, part of a doctorate thesis presented to the "Angelicum". It will be found, in substance, to be the doctrine contained in Fr. Harrington's *The Sacrament of Penance*²: "... the priest in confession has the grave responsibility of acting in God's name. He is there not as a man merely, but as God's representative. And he must not betray the secrets of God. Hence this obligation is so strict that nothing can destroy it."

E. J. MAHONEY.

¹*The Ultimate Reason of the Inviolability of the Sacramental Secret*, p. 60. 11 Rutland Street, Limerick.

²*Treasury of the Faith*, n. xxvii, p. 79.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

INCENSATION

Should a server incense the Blessed Sacrament whilst the celebrant is giving the Benediction? (W.)

REPLY

S.R.C. 7 September, 1861, n. 3108 ad vi: In expositione SS^mi Eucharistiae sacramenti, dum a Sacerdote benedictio fidelibus impertitur, debet nec ne Thuriferarius incensare SS^mum? *Resp.* Non praescribi; et servandam consuetudinem locorum. A previous reply, n. 2956 ad ix, was merely "Non praescribi".

Commentary on the Clementine Instruction, *Decreta Authentica* (1900), V, p. 117: Silentium quod tenent *Caeremoniale, Rituale, Instructio Clementina*, et auctores fere omnes, qui ceteroqui nihil omiserunt de iis, quae in sacra hac actione servanda sunt, plane suadet hanc incensationem esse omittendam: nihilominus Cavalerius et Tetamus . . . innixi quodam Decreto, quod dicunt Romae datum 16 March, 1746, et Rubrica Missalis tit. 13 (*Ritus Celebrandi*, VIII, 8, and XIII, 2) existimant faciendam esse, vel saltem in arbitrio relinqui. Videtur tamen magis congruere contrariam sententiam consentaneam silentio *Caeremonialis, Ritualis et Instructionis*.

To the above liturgical books, which say nothing about this incensation, should be added our English *Ritus Servandus*. Fortescue holds that incensation is the custom with us in this country, in which case we have merely to continue the custom as directed by n. 3108. The mode of incensing should then be, it seems, with three double swings as explained in this REVIEW, 1940, XIX, p. 159.

If there is no settled custom the authors are, on the whole, against introducing it, and we are in agreement with them for the reasons outlined by the commentator on the *Clementine Instruction*. No one has ever succeeded in tracing the alleged decree of 16 March, 1746, which is probably only a private reply given by some Roman rubrician. Nor does the rubric of the Missal provide an argument in favour of the practice: the thurifer performs the incensation because deacon, sub-deacon and ceremoniaris are occupied: in Requiem Masses the sub-deacon is directed to do it since he is not holding the paten as in other Masses; this is the only occasion on which the sacred species are incensed during Mass and the thurifer does it *faute de mieux*, but during the rite of Benediction this incensation has already been performed by the celebrant, and it is unfitting that it should be repeated by another person of lower dignity. The chief argument, however, against the practice is the silence of the rubrics on the subject.

E. J. M.

ADMINISTRATION OF HOLY COMMUNION

A Convent Chaplain administering Holy Communion *extra Missam* proceeds immediately to the Infirmary, and gives the blessing with the ciborium on his return. Should the blessing "Benedictio Dei Omnipotentis, etc." also be given? If so, when exactly is the correct time for giving it? (S.)

REPLY

The solution of this doubt turns upon a decision whether the communion of the sick in this case forms one rite with the communion of the nuns in the oratory, or whether it must be considered a separate rite.

(i) On an analogy with the rules permitting the priest's departure from the altar during Mass to communicate a sick person, a similar departure is permissible *a fortiori* when the rite is not Mass but administering Holy Communion outside Mass. Canon 868: "Sacerdoti celebranti non licet Eucharistiam intra Missam distribuere fidelibus adeo adstantibus ut ipse altare e conspectu amittat." In addition to this criterion of the altar being within sight, S.R.C. 3322, ad 2, sanctions departure from the altar when Holy Communion is to be given "in aliquibus cubiculis, ex quibus, etsi Altare non videatur, tamen vox Sacerdotis celebrantis auditur". This latter instruction is not mentioned amongst the sources of Canon 868 and may, as many think, be abrogated. The principle, however, remains intact: the priest may leave the altar to communicate persons at a distance provided they may be considered as morally united with the recipients at the altar.

If, therefore, the Infirmary in the above case is judged to be of this character, e.g. a tribune overlooking the chapel, the priest proceeds there, after communicating the nuns at the altar rail, and on his return completes the rite as in the Roman Ritual, Tit. IV, cap. ii. The blessing is not with the ciborium but with the words "Benedictio Dei Omnipotentis, etc."

(ii) If, on the other hand, the Infirmary is totally distinct from the chapel, it will be necessary to keep the rite of communicating the sick in Tit. IV, cap. iv absolutely distinct from that in cap. ii. To avoid replacing the ciborium in the tabernacle, the sick should be visited first and the rite completed with the ciborium benediction, as in c. iv. Removing the humeral veil the priest communicates those in the chapel as in c. ii, concluding with the blessing "Benedictio Dei Omnipotentis, etc."¹

E. J. M.

¹ Cf. CLERGY REVIEW, 1937, XIII, p. 71; 1940, XVIII, p. 550; O'Connell, *Celebration of Mass*, Vol. II, p. 164.

CIBORIUM VEIL

Should the silk covering always veil the ciborium (1) during the Mass at which fresh particles are being consecrated and (2) when the ciborium is empty after purification? (S.)

REPLY

(i) By "veil" in this connection is chiefly meant the silk covering which is placed over the tabernacle and over all vessels containing the reserved sacred species. The rubrics in *Ritus Celebrandi*, Tit. II, n. 3, and in the following sections do not expressly take into account the circumstance of Mass being said at an altar with a tabernacle; but Tit. X, n. 7, directs the rubrics which conclude the Mass on Holy Thursday to be observed whenever the sacred species are to remain on the altar till the end of Mass, and the celebrant is directed to cover the chalice containing the reserved Host with a veil immediately after he has consumed the Precious Blood. Accordingly, this is the precise time when the veil should be put over the consecrated ciborium, which is then placed in the tabernacle if the altar has one. It is incorrect to cover the ciborium immediately after its consecration, firstly, because of the above rubrics; secondly, because the principle is that the sacred species should be covered with a veil when reserved, but the ciborium does not begin to be reserved until the Mass is concluded with the consumption of the oblation.

(ii) But, unhappily, "veil" has another meaning in more recent instructions of S.R.C., based on the principle, as far as these matters are subject to a principle, that sacred vessels when not actually in use should be veiled from the public gaze. Thus n. 4268, ad 7 directs the monstrance to be covered with a veil. On this principle many writers hold that the ciborium should be veiled both before the offertory and after its purification. There are no explicit rubrics or instructions on the point, and one is consequently free to veil the ciborium or not at times other than between the Offertory and the Communion of the Mass.¹

E. J. M.

ANTICIPATING MATINS

Your reply to a query on this subject, May 1941, p. 450, implies that only those who enjoy an indult—which is easily obtainable—may anticipate Matins from midday. Have you not overlooked the declaration given by S.C. de Propaganda Fide, 6 December, 1935, which extends the privilege indiscriminately to all? (R.C.)

¹ Cf. O'Connell, *Celebration of Mass*, Vol. II, p. 56, n. 3; CLERGY REVIEW, 1937, XIII, p. 230.

REPLY

S.R.C., 12 May, 1905, n. 4158, ad 1: Utrum, in privata recitatione, Matutinum pro sequenti die incipi posse hora secunda pomeridiana, aut standum sit tabellae Directorii diocesani, omni tempore? *Resp.* Affirmative ad primam, negative ad secundam.

S.C. de Propaganda Fide, 6 December, 1935¹: ". . . declaravit privilegium anticipandi a meridie recitationem Matutini cum Laudibus diei sequentis in favorem Piae Unionis Cleri a Missionibus, iuxta rescriptum *S.C. de Propaganda Fide*, sub die 2 Decembris, 1921 datum, valere *pro omnibus* qui sacrum officium recitare tenentur.

(i) The common law now is that the private recitation of Matins is permitted from 2 p.m. on the preceding day. The original reply of *S.R.C.*, 12 May, 1905, was the familiar "consulantur probati auctores", but in the authentic text issued in 1912 we find this phrase replaced by a simple affirmative as in n. 4158, ad 1. The Holy See has definitely sanctioned the custom of reciting Matins privately from 2 p.m. of the previous day. Our reply in the May issue of this journal discussed the view that 2 p.m. might mean 1 p.m., and reference was made to the many indults which permitted the private recital of Matins from midday. If, however, the rescript of 6 December, 1935, permits all persons who are bound to recite Office the privilege of anticipating Matins from midday, it must follow that the 2 p.m. rule is no longer the common law, in which case all discussion about the precise meaning of 2 p.m. is unnecessary and irrelevant.

(ii) We must observe, firstly, that a decision of *S.C. de Propaganda Fide* applies only to those under its jurisdiction, and that any modification of the 2 p.m. common law rule "pro omnibus" would have to come from the *Congregation of Rites*.

But it is, we think, quite certain that the declaration of 6 December, 1935, does not relax the common law even for those under the jurisdiction of Propaganda. The rescript was given in order to clarify the previous one dated 2 December, 1921: "Sanctitas sua . . . dignata est concedere ut singuli *Sacerdotes* qui nomen dederint vel daturi sint in posterum Piae Unionis Cleri a Missionibus, anticipare possint vel a meridie recitationem Matutini cum Laudibus subsequentis diei dummodo tamen officium diei iam persolverint." Since the privilege was explicitly given only to the priest members of this Association, and many of its members are clerics in major orders who have not yet reached the priesthood, it was doubtful whether these latter enjoyed the privilege. The solution of the doubt was that the privilege is for all who are bound to the recitation of Office, it being understood that "all" means "all those who are members of the Association, whether priests or not".

There is, perhaps, some basis in the wording of the declaration, for

¹ *A.A.S.*, 1935, XXVII, p. 489; *CLERGY REVIEW*, 1936, XI, p. 251

supposing that "pro omnibus" refers to others besides members, but we know of only one commentator, to whom our correspondent refers, who holds this view. Coelho, in *Corso di Liturgia Romana*, Vol. IV, p. 30, writes: "Un Decreto delle S.C. di Propaganda Fide, del 6 dicembre, 1935, estende a tutti il privilegio, che prima aveano gli ascritti alla Pia Unione Missionaria del Clero, di anticipare a mezzogiorno la recita del Mattutino e delle Lodi del giorno seguente." We think this is incorrect, and the commentator in *Periodica*, 1936, XXV, p. 19, expressly warns readers against falling into this error: "Privilegium ergo nullomodo extenditur ad sacerdotes vel clericos qui huius Piae Unionis Cleri a missionibus membra non sunt . . ."

E. J. M.

HAIL MARY—"OUR" LORD IS WITH THEE

Many popular prayer-books of a century ago print "*Our* Lord is with thee" instead of "*The* Lord is with thee". Why and when was the change introduced? (F.L.)

REPLY

It was introduced through the influence of Challoner's revision of the Rheims New Testament. The original translators nearly always rendered "Dominus" by "Our Lord", and they considered the point of sufficient significance to be the subject of a note on 1 Tim. vi, 20: "And now we Catholics must not say '*the* Lord' but '*our* Lord', as we say *our* Lady for His mother, not *the* Lady. Let us keep our forefathers' words, and we shall easily keep our old and true faith that we had of the first Christians." Bishop Challoner altered this established Catholic usage, thinking doubtless, as Canon Burton suggests, that the reasons for avoiding the Protestant usage had ceased to exist and that his own version was nearer the Vulgate.

Cardinal Wiseman deeply resented this changing of the pronoun into the article, "a change which we strongly deprecate, as stiff, cantish, destructive of the unction which the prayer breathes, and of that union which the pronoun inspires between the reciter and Her who is addressed". He pointed out that "*Our* Lord is with thee" was the Catholic version current in England even before the Rhemish translation appeared, and that this form should be preserved in the prayer even though accuracy of translation demands, perhaps, that the article should be used in a vernacular version of the New Testament.

However, the use of the article for the pronoun is now universal and we find that the *Hail Mary* is printed thus in current French, Dutch and German prayer-books. Wiseman writes that Catholics have always, till

lately, been accustomed to say "Our Lord is with thee"—his words were written in 1837—but we cannot give any specific date when the change was officially introduced. No doubt it came in gradually as Catholics became accustomed to Challoner's version in the New Testament and in the Catechism.¹

E. J. M.

BENEDICTIO HABITUS CLERICALIS

In the rituals previous to the *editio typica*, 1925, the prayer ended: "*et inter reliquos homines conversatione sancta tibi agnoscantur esse dicati*". The typical edition omits the words in italics. Is this an error or a revised text. If an error, should the prayer still be said in its earlier form? (W.S.)

REPLY

We think that the omission is certainly a typographical error, extremely uncommon in current liturgical books. It is found in the Mame edition, 1925, but has been corrected in later printings of the *editio typica* so as to conform with the earlier text, e.g. Desclée edition, 1935.

The decree S.R.C., 10 June, 1925,² approving the 1925 *editio typica* reads: ". . . ratam habuit et approbavit, atque uti *typicam* habendam esse decrevit, cui futuræ editiones eiusdem Ritualis Romani conformandæ erunt." We do not know of any later direction from S.R.C. correcting the error, but the official approbation obviously refers to the substance of the text and not to any possible typographical errors contained in it. Therefore, the truncated text of the prayer in *Appendix*, n. 13, found in certain early printings of the 1925 *Rituale Romanum*, should be corrected by adding the missing words.

E. J. M.

¹ Cf. Burton, *Life and Times of Bishop Challoner*, I, p. 282; Wiseman, DUBLIN REVIEW April, 1837, and *Essays on Various Subjects*, I, p. 76.

² *A.A.S.*, 1925, XVII, p. 326.

ROMAN DOCUMENTS

(i) SUPREMA SACRA CONGREGATIO S. OFFICII

DE CAUTIONIBUS IN MIXTIS NUPTIIS PRAESTANDIS (*A.A.S.*, xxxiii, 1941, p. 294).

In generali consensu Supremae S. Congregationis S. Officii propositis sequentibus dubiis :

(I) An validum habendum sit matrimonium celebratum inter partem catholicam et partem acatholicam certe non baptizatam, cum dispensatione ab impedimento disparitatis cultus, si sola pars acatholica cautiones ad normam can. 1061, §1, n. 2 (c. 1071) C. I. C. praescriptas praestiterit ;

(II) an validum habendum sit matrimonium celebratum inter partem catholicam et partem acatholicam certe non baptizatam, cum eadem dispensatione, ante Codicis Iuris Canonici promulgationem, si sola pars acatholica cautiones praescriptas praestiterit ;

et quatenus negative ad I et II dubium,

(III) utrum tractandae sint tales causae nullitatis matrimonii ad normam cann. 1990-1992 C. I. C., an coram tribunali collegiali ad ordinarium tramitem iuris :

Eññi ac Revñi DD. Cardinales rebus fidei et morum tutandis praepositi, praehabito RR. DD. Consultorum voto, respondendum decreverunt :

Ad I et II : *Negative*, nisi pars catholica cautiones *saltem implicite* praestiterit ;

ad III : *Negative* ad primam partem, *Affirmative* ad secundam, nisi in casu particulari certo constet de requisitis in can. 1990 ; et ad mentem.

Mens autem est : Etsi Sancta Sedes e praxi immemoriali exegerit, et nunc stricte exigit ut conditionibus adimplendis in quibuslibet matrimoniis mixtis cautum sit per formalem promissionem ab utraque parte *explicite* requisitam et praestitam (cc. 1061, 1071), tamen usus facultatis dispensandi, sive ordinariae sive delegatae, invalidus dici nequit si utraque pars *saltem implicite cautiones praestiterit*, i.e., eos actus posuerit e quibus concludendum sit et in foro externo constare possit eam cognoscere obligationem adimplendi conditiones et manifestasse firmum propositum illi obligationi satisfaciendi.

Sequenti feria V, die 8 eiusdem mensis et anni, Sññus D. N. Pius, divina Providentia Papa XII, in Audientia Excñño ac Revñño Dño Adessori S. Officii impertita, relatum Sibi Eññorum Patrum resolutionem approbavit, confirmavit et publicari iussit.

Datum Romae, ex Aedibus S. Officii, die 10 Maii, 1941.

i. This reply of the Holy Office deals with a situation which must be unusual (the guarantees being given by the unbaptized party alone), and very likely the question has been cast in this form in order to bring out more clearly the point which it is desired to stress. The essential thing is for the Church to be morally certain that the children of the marriage shall be

baptized and educated as Catholics; the mode by which this certainty is reached is accessory, but for the purpose of judging the validity of such marriages in the external forum some precise rules are necessary about this mode. The normal rule—*generaliter*—is that the guarantees must be in writing (Canon 1061, §2), but this is not a *sine qua non* for the grant of valid dispensation. (Cf. CLERGY REVIEW, X, 1935, p. 60.) Normally also the guarantees must be given *expressly*, but the *ad mentem* paragraph in the above document makes it equally clear that even this is not a *sine qua non*; it suffices if it is implied from various circumstances that the obligation is understood by the parties and will be observed.

Incidentally, in this connection, the Holy Office declares that delegated faculties may be validly used even if the guarantees are not expressly given; Gasparri, *De Matrimonio*, I, n. 450, quoted in this journal, VIII, 1934, p. 246, seems to hold that the wording of the indult usually requires the guarantees to be given "formally" or "expressly" and that, therefore, the Holy See alone can grant a dispensation on a merely implied guarantee; we are of the opinion that such clauses in the wording of indults should now be regarded as affecting only the *lawful* use of delegated faculties, unless it is unequivocally stated that they are to be observed *sub poena nullitatis*. Cf. a rather similar declaration of the mind of the Holy Office in a decree of 10 December, 1902, *Fontes*, n. 1262: "Mens est: Quod si in aliquo casu extraordinario talia concurrant adiuncta, ut Episcopus valeat sibi comparare moralem certitudinem tam de huiusmodi cautionum sinceritate pro praesenti, quam de earum adimplimento pro futuro, specialesque omnino adsint rationes impediennes ne consueto modo cautiones praestentur, ipsius conscientiae et prudentiae."

Not only should the guarantees normally be given in writing and expressly, but they should be obtained from both parties—*uterque coniux* (Canon 1061, §1, 2). The above reply of the Holy Office declares that if the unbaptized party alone gives the guarantees, and none is forthcoming even implicitly from the Catholic, the marriage is invalid because the dispensation is invalid. The reason is evident: moral certainty that the guarantees will be observed is scarcely conceivable unless they are obtained from the Catholic party. If, on the other hand, the guarantees are obtained from the Catholic party alone, it is not inconceivable, in given circumstances, for the requisite certainty to be considered present. This may be deduced from the way in which these questions and answers are framed in the document. But it may not be deduced, in our opinion, that delegated faculties may validly be used when the guarantees are obtained from the Catholic party alone. In a case of this kind, a dispensation should be sought from the Holy See.

ii. The law of Canon 1061, of which the above decision is an authentic interpretation, was in force long before the Code. Cf. *Fontes*, nn. 1292, 1293. "Interpretatio authentica, per modum legis exhibita, eandem vim habet ac lex ipsa; et si verba legis in se certa declaret tantum, promulga-

tione non eget et valet retrorsum . . ." (Canon 17, §2). Therefore, in coming to a decision about the validity of marriages contracted with an invalid dispensation from "difference of worship", it is irrelevant whether they were contracted before or after the promulgation of the Code.

iii. In declaring the nullity of such marriages, one could rarely be certain that the dispensation was invalidly given, owing to the sufficiency of an "implied" guarantee. Accordingly, the conditions for the summary process of Canons 1990-1992 will rarely be verified, i.e. "simulque pari certitudine (quod nulli contradictioni vel exceptioni obnoxium sit) apparuerit dispensationem super his impedimentis datam non esse."

E. J. M.

(ii) SUPREMA CONGREGATIO SANCTI OFFICII

DE PRAEVIA LIBRORUM CENSURA (*A.A.S.*, xxxiii, 1941, p. 121).

Cum plurics acciderit ut decreto Supremae S. Congregationis S. Officii prohiberi aut e commercio retrahi debuerint libri, qui cum praescripta licentia Ordinariorum editi erant, eadem Sacra Congregatio S. Officii locorum Ordinarios et Superiores religiosos enixe hortatur, ut in curanda praevia censura librorum caute omnino procedant et licentiam edendi ne concedant, nisi postquam a censoribus *idoneis, in re vere peritis*, ad examen deputatis sententiam faventem habuerint.

Datum Romae, ex Aedibus Sancti Officii, die 29 Martii, 1941.

The qualities required in an episcopal censor are set out in Canon 1393, §3: "Censores ex utroque clero eligantur aetate, eruditione, prudentia commendati, qui in doctrinis probandis improbandisque medio tutoque itinere eant." The Holy Office now declares that the censor must be "vere peritus", a qualification discussed in Canons 1792 seq. in connection with the employment of "periti" in judicial processes.

E. J. M.

(iii) PONTIFICIA COMMISSIO AD CODICIS CANONES AUTHENTICE INTERPRETANDOS

RESPONSA AD PROPOSITA DUBIA (*A.A.S.*, xxxiii, 1941, p. 173).

Em̃i Patres Pontificiae Commissionis ad Codicis canones authenticice interpretandos, propositis in plenario coetu quae sequuntur dubiis, responderi mandarunt ut infra ad singula:

(I) DE IURE FUNERANDI

D. An sub verbis canonis 1233, §1: *clerici . . . ipsi ecclesiae addicti*, veniant etiam ecclesiae cathedralis vel collegialis capitulares, qua tales.

R. Negative.

(II) DE SEPARATIONE CONIUGUM

D. An causae separationis coniugum recensendae sint inter causas nunquam transeuntes in rem iudicatam, de quibus in canonibus 1903 et 1989.

R. Affirmative.

Datum Romae, e Civitate Vaticana, die 8 Aprilis, anno 1941.

M. Card. MASSIMI, *Praeses*.

ad I. Canon 1233 determines the right of certain clerics and other persons to form part of a funeral cortège, and it declares that the clergy attached to a church have a special claim to an invitation. The present decision is that the canons of a Cathedral or Collegiate Church are not included. As noted in *Periodica*, XX, 1931, p. 140, by "attached clergy" in this connection is meant the clergy engaged in ministering to the people. Cf. *Apollinaris*, III, 1930, p. 134, for a full discussion of the meaning of the words "ecclesiae addicti".

ad II. All marriage causes, e.g. declarations of nullity, may be re-opened if new proofs, arguments or documents of grave moment are produced. The same rule, it is decided, applies even to "separatio tori, mensae et habitationis" (Canons 1128-1132).

E. J. M.

(iv) SACRA CONGREGATIO RITUUM

SANCTUS MICHAËL ARCHANGELUS PRO RADIOLOGIS ET RADIUMTHERAPEUTICIS PATRONUS AC PROTECTOR DECLARATUR (*A.A.S.*, xxxiii, 1941, p. 128).

Inter mira huius temporis inventa praecipuum sane locum obtinent quae radiologicam artem et radium therapeiam spectant; quarum prima ad naturae secreta atque corporum organa introspicienda, utraque vero ad gravissimos insanabilesque morbos curandos radiorum ope aptissimae sunt. Cum autem tantorum inventorum usus ac exercitatio non sine ipsorum medentium periculo fiant, ne radiologis et radiumtherapeuticis itemque miserrimis aegrotis Omnipotentis Dei auxilium desit, Angelos et Sanctos intercessores adhibere populum christianum decet.

Quapropter Italiae Societatis Radiologiae Medicae Praeses, nomine fere omnium Italiae Radiologorum, Sanctissimo Domino Nostro Pio Papae XII humillimas obtulit preces ut Sanctus Michaël Archangelus Radiologorum Patronus et Protector declaretur et constituatur.

Sanctitas porro Sua, referente infrascripto Domino Cardinali, Sacrae Rituum Congregationis Praefecto, die 15 Ianuarii huius anni, has preces benignissime excipiens, Sanctum Michaëlem Archangelum Patronum et Protectorem pro Radiologis et Radiumtherapeuticis declarare et constituere dignata est: ut Quem contra nequitiam diaboli praesidium experimur, Eum in nostris infirmitatibus solatium habeamus.

Contrariis non obstantibus quibuscumque.

Datum Romae, ex S. Rituum Congregatione, die 15 Ianuarii, 1941.

✠ C. Card. SALOTTI, Ep. Praenest., *Praefectus*.

The declaration is for Italian dioceses only, but it would easily be extended to other nations if desired. From Canon 1278 the sanction of the Holy See is required before a patron may be constituted for any group of persons.

E. J. M.

(V) SACRA PAENITENTIARIA APOSTOLICA

(OFFICIUM DE INDULGENTIIS)

INDULTUM CIRCA PIA EXERCITIA PER MENSEM AGENDA (*A.A.S.*, xxxiii, 1941, p. 129).

Scimus Dominus Noster Pius div. Prov. Pp. XII, in audientia infra scripto Cardinali Paenitentiario Maiori die 15 mensis Februarii vertentis anni concessa, haec quae sequuntur benigne decernere dignatus est :

Eo fere modo, quo de pio Exercitio per mensem agendo in honorem S. Ioseph a S. Congregatione de Indulgentiis die 18 mensis Iulii 1877 statutum est (cf. *Preces et pia Opera Indulgentiis ditata*, ed. 1938, n. 428 sub nota), quotiescumque opportunum ducitur pia id genus Exercitia, in ecclesiis vel publicis aut (pro legitime utentibus) semipublicis oratoriis per mensem publice peracta, die festo absolvere, qui non sit postremus eiusdem mensis dies, idque vel ex eo quod christifidelibus facilius evadat ad sacram Confessionem et ad sacram Synaxim sub fine pii huius Exercitii accedere, vel ex alia iusta causa, tum idem Exercitium incipere quovis die licet sive illius mensis, qui ex more celebratur, sive mensis antecedentis, ita tamen ut Exercitium per triginta dierum spatium peragatur.

Contrariis non obstantibus quibuslibet.

Datum Romae, ex aedibus S. Paenitentiariae, die 10 Martii, 1941.

L. Card. LAURI, *Paenitentiarius Maior*.

The indulgenced devotions in honour of St. Joseph throughout the month of March may be commenced, if desired, on the 19th of February, as decided by the Congregation of Indulgences in 1877. This principle is now extended and applied to all the indulgenced devotions associated with certain months of the year, e.g. The Holy Name of Jesus (January) or The Precious Blood (July). The only essential thing is that they should continue for thirty days : they may begin on any day of the month named, or of the previous month, to suit the convenience and devotion of the faithful, and it is no longer necessary for the "month" to be computed rigidly from the first to the thirtieth day.

E. J. M.

(vi) MOTU PROPRIO

Missa, quae media nocte nativitatis D. N. Iesu Christi celebrari solet, in pervigilio eiusdem nativitatis sub vesperam celebranda permittitur (A.A.S. XXII, 1940, p. 529).

PIUS PP. XII

Cum bellica conflictio in praeiens exercitiis modo, sed interdum etiam pacificis civibus ruinam caedemque afferat, Nos, qui paternum erga cunctos populos gerimus animum, nihil reliqui facimus quod aliquid valeat superni saltem solacii iis omnibus impertire, qui belli causa quovis modo aegerrime afficiantur.

Iamvero, adventantibus Nataliciis Sollemnibus, Nobiscum animo recogitamus non sine difficultate ac discrimine fore ut sacri ritus, qui media nocte Nativitatis Domini summa cum christiani sensus delectatione haberi assolent, haud paucis locis a christifidelibus celebrari queant. Etenim multis in Nationibus ob nocturnas aëronavium incursiones, quae hinc inde ab inimicis perpetrantur, lege cautum est ut omnia restringantur vel obstruantur lumina, ne facilius urbes, oppida, pagi irruentium e caelo hostium offensionibus pateant.

Futurum utique sperare ac confidere Nobis liceat, ut sanctissima saltem ea nocte sanctissimoque die, vel sponte, vel ex conducto, indutiae ab omnibus fiant, ne armorum clangor iteratos in sacris aedibus angelicos pacis concentus obruat, neve fraterni cruoris effusio caelestem illius horae laetitiam obturbet ac misere interimat.

Utumque tamen, Nos cupientes admodum, quod supra diximus, ut nihil christifidelibus desit e supernis muneribus ac solaciis, re mature perpensa, motu proprio ac de apostolicae plenitudine potestatis haec, quae sequuntur, decernimus ac statuimus :

I. Perdurantibus harum tristissimarum rerum adiunctis, in iis regionibus, in quibus lex obstruendae lucis viget, singulis locorum Ordinariis concedere liceat, ut in Ecclesiis Primatiales, Metropolitanis, Cathedralibus, Collegiatis et Paroecialibus unica Missa Conventualis vel Paroecialis, quae media nocte Nativitatis Domini celebrari potest, in pervigilio sub vesperam celebretur : ita quidem ut cum sacri ritus finem habeant, aliquid supersit temporis antequam lex, de qua supra, in effectum deducatur. Id ipsum pariter locorum Ordinarii concedere possunt ceteris ecclesiis et oratoriis publicis—non vero semipublicis privatisque oratoriis—dummodo sive ex saeculari vel immemorabili consuetudine, sive ex indulto Apostolico privilegio fruuntur celebrandi Eucharisticum Sacrificium media nocte Nativitatis Domini.

II. Ante Missam Conventualem, de qua supra, vespere celebrandam, Matutinum in choro recitari potest, idem incipiendo, pro opportunitate, vel ab hora duodecima.

III. Qui sacerdotes hac concessione fructi fuerint, poterunt postridie duas solummodo Eucharisticas litationes peragere, si modo naturale ieiunium a media nocte servaverint.

IV. Oportet autem sacrorum administri, qui hoc privilegio utantur, cum divina hostia in pervigilio Nativitatis Domini litare incipiant, quatuor iam horas nihil cibi vel potus sumpserint.

V. Ii omnes, qui Eucharistico Sacrificio, in pervigilio Nativitatis Domini celebrato, pie intererunt, praecepto die Natali audiendi sacra satisfacient.

VI. Ac praeterea christifideles omnes, qui pridie Natalem Domini sub vesperam Eucharistico Sacrificio intererunt, etiamsi iam mane Eucharistico pabulo sese enutrierint, ad sacram tamen Synaxim accedere poterunt, dummodo rite expiati riteque dispositi quattuor itidem iam horas nihil cibi vel potus sumpserint. Nequibunt vero iidem postero die divinam iterum hostiam de altari libare.

Quae vero a Nobis hisce litteris motu proprio datis statuta sunt, ea omnia firma ac rata esse volumus ac iubemus, contrariis quibuslibet non obstantibus.

Datum Romae, apud Sanctum Petrum, die 1 mensis Decembris, anno MDCCCCXXX, Pontificatus Nostri secundo.

Pius PP. XII

This document, which did not reach us in time last year, is now printed, since it regulates the anticipated Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, "perdurantibus harum tristissimarum rerum adiunctis".

E. J. M.

BOOK REVIEW

Black Martyrs. By J. P. Thoonen (St. Joseph's Missionary Society, Mill Hill). (Sheed & Ward, 1941. 12s. 6d.)

ALTHOUGH its Catholic history dates back little more than sixty years, Uganda is already a land of richest fulfilment of Catholic missionary labours. Achilles Kiwanuka was one of the first Christian martyrs there in 1886; in 1939 Joseph Kiwanuka, of the same clan, was consecrated the first native bishop of the new Christian Africa by Pope Pius XII, and now rules a Catholic diocese in Uganda. These two events epitomize a grand chapter of Catholic history which is only now being fully recorded.

Church history is a living stream which flows over the whole world, fertilizing it, and Uganda is just as important as any European country. Indeed, it may, in the future, become more important than most if Pius XI was the prophet we think he was. However this may be, it has sixty years of Catholic history into which are packed all the ingredients for first-rate studies in the comparatively new separate science of missiology.

Fr. J. A. Thoonen, of St. Joseph's Missionary Society, Mill Hill, whose members, along with the White Fathers, work extensively in Uganda, was therefore given the task of making a brief survey of this and fitting into it a definitive study of the lives and times of Uganda's twenty-two martyrs (1885-1887). He knows the land and the language and lived there long enough to learn to love the people. His painstaking and accurate reconstruction of the setting of this glorious tragedy, and his patient and laborious unearthing and collation of every scrap of evidence, including much that was new, especially from Protestant sources, have therefore resulted in a very valuable and reliable work as well as a thrilling story.

The author had to weave twenty-two biographies into it—no easy task if the characters were to come to life. Yet by careful attention to the full details given in the various processes preceding their beatification—testimonies of eye-witnesses and reports of actual conversations—Fr. Thoonen has brought these boys and young men to life. When the unusual setting has been carefully drawn in the first three chapters, they come on to the stage, one by one or in small groups. After the accession of King Mwanga—unstable, vicious, surrounded by loyal Christians and intriguing corrupt counsellors, who hated both them and their virtues—the story unfolds itself. Many of the names are familiar—Père Lourdel, the White Father who played such an important part and watched his spiritual children go to their death; Joseph Mukasa and Charles Lwanga, men of heroic sanctity; little Kizito, who has already given his name to a missionary publication. But the book tells the tale of the whole glorious little army of martyrs and of the full flower of faith that sprang from the soil watered by their blood. The people of Uganda will treasure it; teachers and preachers alike will enrich their instructions from it.

It may seem odd to write in this fashion about what is admittedly a

thesis in missiology, the first to be written in English, so far as we know. Such a description might well deter the boldest reader. It need not and should not. It was the present writer who read the manuscript of the thesis and suggested that, with minor alterations, it should be made into a book with the title, *Black Martyrs*. It seemed right that one of the most inspiring stories of martyrdom, so well told and given the realistic touch of authentic history, should go further than a hundred printed archive copies. Now that it has done so he is well pleased and feels that many others will be grateful for Fr. Thoonen's work.

G. T.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE TEACHING OF DOGMATIC THEOLOGY (CLERGY REVIEW, 1941, XXI, p. 9; XXI, p. 186)

"Paedagogus" writes :

I am extremely grateful to C. for putting forward another view of the teaching of Dogmatic Theology, and only regret that in so small a space he could do little more than disagree without discussion. *Aspice num mage sit nostrum penetrabile telum.*

Let me answer first his objections to the heuristic method (C. does me wrong by putting the tutorial cart before the heuristic horse): it is said that the manuals proceed as I suggest; in answer I can only refer to the original article, for all manuals open a question not with a problem, but with a conclusion; and in any case the matter is surely irrelevant, for the method is there suggested not for manuals but for lectures. It still seems to me strange and alarming that after nearly half a century only a few adventurous theologians have taken advantage of a positively Copernican and universally recognized revolution in the teaching of languages and history, of science and mathematics; few have dared to revert to the common-sense methods of all great teachers and of Our Lord Himself (cf. Matt. xxii, 41 *seq.*).

On the question of "tutorials" C. reacts "against the movement to substitute the teaching methods of modern non-Catholic Universities for the traditional and well-tried methods of Catholic Seminaries". I suggested the system not because of the prestige of institutions where it is in use, but because it is a very good way of teaching; R. W. Chambers tells a tale of a professor who held it was his first duty to reduce his class to one: then he could begin to teach. Even if it were found only among the most modern and abandoned heretics, why should we not spoil the Egyptians? But in fact it has an honourable ancestry in the education of single students

by parish priests and university masters in the Middle Ages; and in these days it might do much to establish in Seminaries the English culture for which Fr. John P. Murphy pleads in the September number of this REVIEW.

This answer owes much to the kindness of many who have written or talked of the matter, almost all with enthusiasm; I beg them to pardon me for using their ideas.

"PERICULUM MATRIMONII CIVILIS"

(CLERGY REVIEW, 1941, XXI, p. 177)

P.P. writes:

Is there *ever* a case, when the parties have gone so far as to sign the promises, when there is not this danger should the dispensation be refused?

Years ago I learned my lesson at the cost of paying for a Special Licence. When the couple had signed the promises I let fall the remark: "Suppose the Bishop refuses the dispensation." The Catholic girl merely smiled nervously and I only discovered just in time that she and her fiancé went straight off to the Protestant Church and put up the banns there!

More recently I ventured the same remark to a good practising Catholic and she replied: "Well, I suppose then we should have to go to the Registrar!"

I don't think we quite appreciate the strength of the "urge to carry on" and the tremendous difficulties involved in breaking the engagement, when matters have gone so far.

Canon Mahoney observes:

The excellent point made by "P.P." goes to the root of the evil. I should think it is true that, in most cases, refusal of a dispensation carries with it the danger of a civil marriage, but if we are to say that this is always necessarily the case, it must follow that a desire to contract a mixed marriage must always be construed as an intention to marry civilly, which for a Catholic means to cohabit unmarried, unless a dispensation is granted. I cannot think that this is the universal attitude of Catholics seeking dispensations, but it is a question of fact which could be more fittingly discussed by experienced parish priests. Supposing the fact to be established, it occurs to me that a good way of meeting an open contempt for Catholic Marriage Laws might be for the Ordinary to refuse to accept this canonical cause, if he judges that the common good of the faithful demands a refusal. "Passim non est cedendum minis," writes De Smet, *De Matrimonio*, §825.13. It is entirely for the bishops, in their pastoral solicitude, to do what they judge to be expedient. As one of them explained, quoted by Ter Haar, *De Matrimoniis Mixtis* (1931), p. 171: "A Bishop, for reasons affecting the public good of his diocese, may refuse to grant what before God and the Church he would be justified in granting in a particular case."

"REGULA PASTORALIS"
(CLERGY REVIEW, 1941, XXI, p. 125)

A Seminary Professor writes :

Some of the younger clergy might like to be reminded of a book which was very familiar three decades back, Bishop Hedley's *Lex Levitarum* (1905), which gives the Latin text of the *Regula* and a commentary adapted to modern needs. It appears that the clergy at all times have found St. Gregory's Latin rather difficult. There is an Anglican version by Rev. H. R. Bramley (1874) which gives the Latin text and an English version on opposite pages. Both books are often to be seen in the second-hand catalogues.

MARRIED SAINTS

"Pastor" writes :

Anna Maria Taigi, beatified 20 May, 1920, but not yet canonized, seems to meet most of the requirements mentioned by Canon Arendzen: large family—small income—husband at her death-bed. (Cf. C.T.S. B.254.)

In the Breviary there is mentioned a *St. Felicity*, mother of the seven martyrs (10 July). *St. Symphorosa*, also mother of seven martyrs, does not qualify since she was herself martyred (18 July, lect. ix). There are many canonized widows, but when their eminent virtues are seen to consist in their married life there seems no reason why they should not be regarded as canonized for their conjugal virtues, not for their heroic widowhood; e.g. royal personages such as *St. Margaret of Scotland* and *St. Elizabeth of Hungary*; mothers of famous sons such as *St. Monica* and *St. Sylvia*; Roman matrons such as *St. Theodora*. At the head of any list of married saints must stand, of course, *St. Anne*.

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